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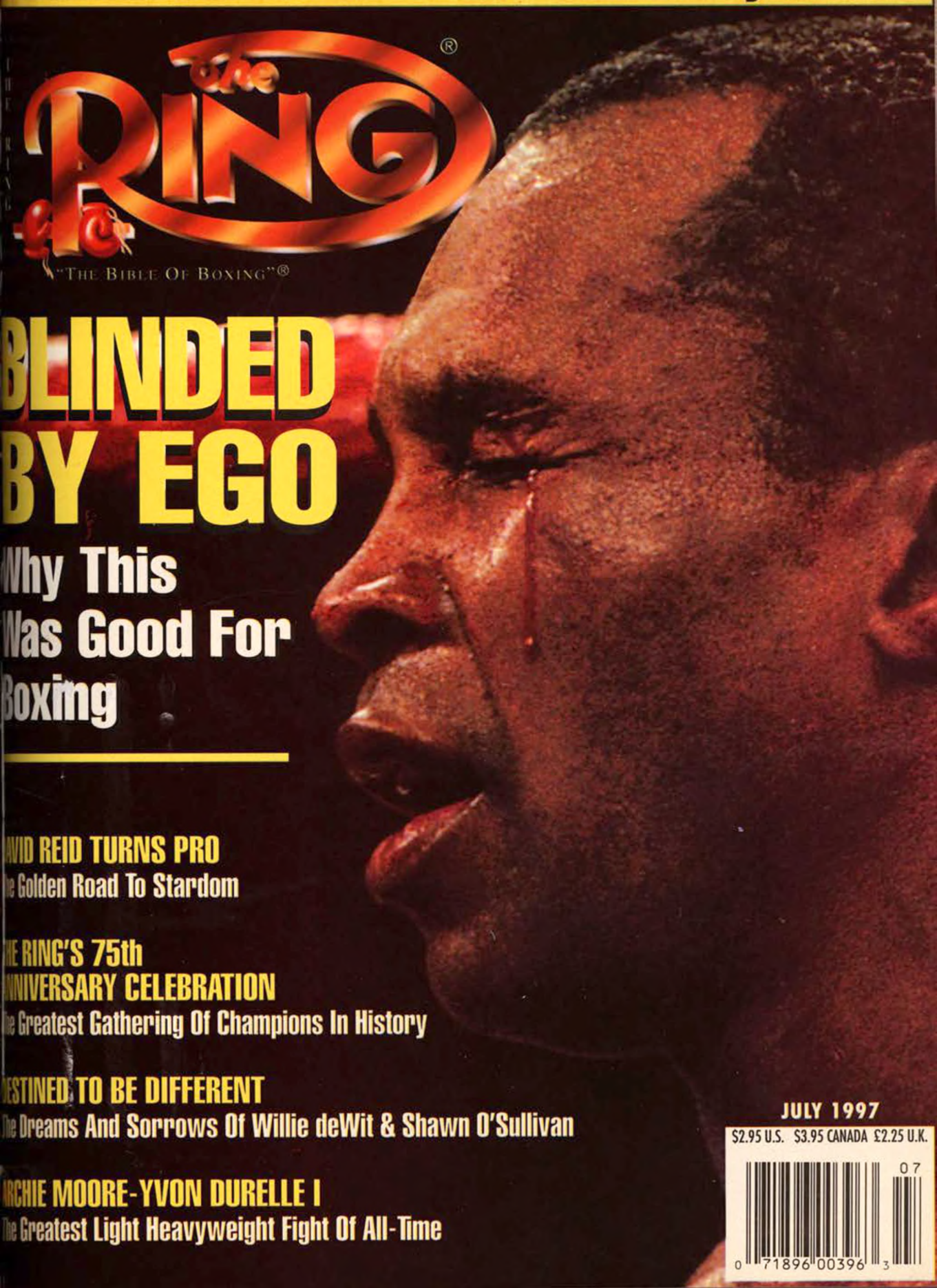

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RINGSIDE

As a 10-year-old growing up in Detroit, Eddie Futch hustled up a couple of dimes so he could buy a boxing magazine at the local candy store. Turns out that magazine, dated February 15, 1922, was the very first issue of THE RING.

Futch never forgot. He told that story while accepting the award for Best Trainer at THE RING's diamond anniversary celebration at Bally's Park Place Casino Resort in Atlantic City. *(See page 38.)* "If you told me back then that I'd one day be honored by THE RING," said Futch, "I wouldn't have believed it."

If you told Nat Fleischer that the magazine he founded would be around 75 years later, he would've had the same reaction. Fleischer intended THE RING to be nothing more than a newsletter covering boxing in New York City. In fact, he didn't quit his full-time job as sports editor of the New York *Telegram* until THE RING was five years old.

I've been editing THE RING for eight years, and if I needed a reminder of how closely the magazine is associated with boxing history, I was provided with one at our anniversary celebration. Almost all of the 30-plus former champions in attendance were cover subjects at some point in their careers. And as Christy Martin told me, the fighters who haven't been featured on the cover still aim to be.

I'm proud of today's version of the magazine, but our bash on the Boardwalk was about the past, not the present. For our staff, the entire weekend was somewhat surreal. Still, as I stood by the bar at the Friday night cocktail party, I tried to absorb as much as I could. I found myself wondering what Fleischer, whom I never met (he died in 1972), would be thinking if he saw Kid Gavilan, 71, and Beau Jack, 75, seated together as boxing royalty. Or what emotions he would've felt watching Sandy Saddler, 70, and suffering from an advanced case of pugilistica dementia, making an increasingly rare public appearance. Or what he would've said to the gathering of Archie Moore, 83, Joey Maxim, 74, and Harold Johnson, 68, all former world light heavyweight champions. Knowing Nat, he would've declared, "Jack Dillon would've wiped the floor with all three of you."

When you're in boxing, and especially when you work at THE RING, it's impossible to ignore the past. And when the past is walking, talking, and jumping in front of you on the buffet line, as was the case at Bally's, it can be overwhelming.

I don't collect autographs; I believe it's unprofessional for someone in my position to do so. But I wasn't hesitant to approach Ruben Olivares and, with Carlos Palomino serving as translator, tell the former bantamweight and featherweight champion he's among my all-time favorite fighters. "Rockabye Ruben" smiled, and that made me feel real good.

Forget all the awards and autographs and memorabilia. You know what our 75th anniversary celebration was really about? Never forgetting, and never being forgotten.

Steve Farhood
Editor-in-Chief

Volume 76, No. 7 **July 1997**

THE RING
"The Bible Of Boxing"

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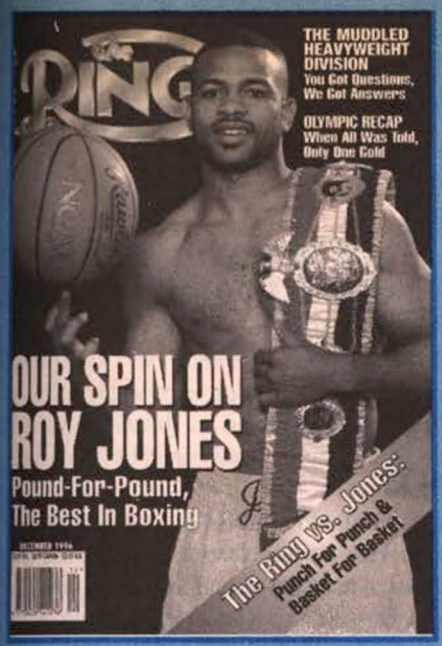
SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES
P.O. Box 910
Ft. Washington, PA 19034

THE RING (ISSN: 0035-5410), Vol. 76, No. 7, is published monthly, with an additional issue in December, by London Publishing Co., 7002 W. Butler Pike, Ambler, PA 19002. Periodicals postage paid at Ambler, PA 19002 and additional post offices. Postmaster: Send change of address notices to: THE RING, P.O. Box 910, Ft. Washington, PA 19034. Single copy price $2.95 ($3.95 in Canada, £2.25 in U.K.). Subscription price $32.45 in the U.S., $42.85 Canada and remaining countries. Not responsible for the loss or non-return of unsolicited articles or photographs, which will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope bearing the proper amount of postage. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher. All rights reserved. FOR ADVERTISING INQUIRIES AND RATES: (215) 643-6385. U.S. and Canadian distribution by Kable News Inc., 11 West 42nd St., New York, NY 10036. International distribution by Worldwide Media Service Inc., 115 East 23rd St., New York, NY 10010, U.K. distribution by Comag, Tavistock Rd., West Drayton, Middlesex UB77QE, England.
Printed in U.S.A.



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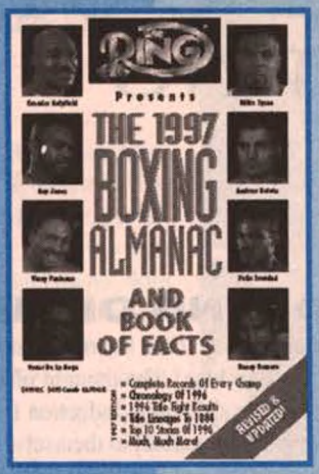

Boxing fans raved about *The 1996 Ring Boxing Almanac And Book Of Facts*. And now the second edition has been published, completely revised and updated. The editors of THE RING have put together the ultimate resource tool, combining a complete review of 1996 with a historical overview of boxing history. The 196-page, digest-sized edition includes: Records and mini-profiles of boxing's world champions (as of January 1) ... A chronology of the top boxing news of '96 ... A complete listing of '96 title fights ... Complete title lineages of all 17 weight divisions, and much more.

The Ring Almanac quickly sold out on most newsstands last year, and now we are offering it free with a one-year subscription to "The Bible Of Boxing"!

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- Columns by renowned boxing writers Steve Farhood, Jeff Ryan, and Jack Fiske
- THE RING's Top 10 ratings in 16 weight classes and the records of all ranked fighters
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COME OUT WRITING

We welcome your letters, which may be edited for reasons of space and clarity. Send your comments to Come Out Writing, The Ring, P.O. Box 1148, Ft. Washington, PA 19034

AIN'T NO KING OF MINE

Something is terribly wrong at the International Boxing Hall of Fame. How could the Hall select Don King for induction this June? The thought of King taking his place beside the noble and great past and current inductees is sickening. Induction is supposed to be the reward for the few who have excelled in boxing while being a credit to themselves and the sport.

Just what qualifications pushed King over the top during the selection process? Was it his ability to nurture young talent from four-round fighter to champion? Was it his fair financial treatment of fighters? Was it his unselfish behind-the-scenes dealings, like those after Buster Douglas knocked out Mike Tyson? Was it his history of being an above-board, law-abiding citizen?

This piece of trash is no friend of boxers and boxing. The Hall of Fame has forever tarnished its image.

BRAIN CURLEY
Brockville, Ontario

WHO ARE THE CHAMPS?

"Too many titles. Nobody knows who the champions are."

I wonder.

Today's multiplicity of titles is certainly vexing, but more so, I suspect, to we supposedly hip-to-the-bull hard-core fans than those seated in armchairs.

We endlessly bemoan the proliferation of sanctioning bodies and the lack of undisputed champions. But Joe Six-pack? That guy doesn't know or give a damn about splintered titles. It's the prospect of a free-swinging slugfest that gets his juices flowing.

Consider last year's two biggest extravaganzas. Although casual fans set pay-per-view records for De La Hoya-Chavez and Holyfield-Tyson, it's dollars to donuts that not one in 50 could identify the alphabet belts at stake in either contest. (I could, and so could you. As hard-core fans, though, what we know counts for zilch. Frankly, there aren't enough of us to fill a casino men's room.)

So curse the alphabet organizations for their corruption, but recognize the essence of what they've come to represent: a stratified proving ground on which fighters can tangibly progress on their journeys to becoming the Holyfields, Trinidads, and Joneses of tomorrow.

Photo by Jay Lash

Don King, shown with Showtime's Jay Larkin, is headed to Canastota for induction into the International Boxing Hall of Fame. The question is, does the controversial promoter belong there?

None of the aforementioned fighters, incidentally, is an undisputed champion. Their widespread acclaim perhaps best conveys the proposition that securing the title of People's Champion is all that really matters.

JOHN BAROUGH
Cedar Rapids, IA

CONTROVERSIAL CONTROVERSIES

Regarding "The 10 Greatest Controversies In Boxing History" (March 1997), I feel compelled to offer a noticeable omission: The 1990 title fight between Julio Cesar Chavez and Meldrick Taylor. With Taylor winning the fight, Chavez delivered a punishing right that dropped the Philadelphian late in the 12th and final round. With two seconds remaining and Taylor back on his feet, referee Richard Steele chose to stop the fight and award Chavez a TKO victory.

At the time, Chavez and Taylor were two of the best fighters, pound-for-pound, in the world. Chavez continued to enjoy great success, while Taylor never fully recovered.

DAN CAFFERTY
Dearborn, MI

WINS AND LOSSES

Over the last few years I've seen a trend toward overreacting to fighters' wins and losses. This is boxing and not pop music. A lot of fans are just too fickle when it comes to glorifying and dismissing popular fighters.

The greatest fighters have had their ups and downs, which is exactly what contributed to their greatness. Consider Louis-Schmeling I, Ali-Spinks I, Louis-Walcott I, Leonard-Duran II, Douglas-Tyson, Bowe-Holyfield I, and Sugar Ray Robinson's losses to Carmen Basilio and Gene Fullmer. These are but a few examples of fighters whose legends only grew because of what they accomplished after losses.

One of the factors that makes boxing so exciting is that anything can happen in one fight, as opposed to the best-of-seven games of the World Series. Yogi Berra said it best: It ain't over till it's over.

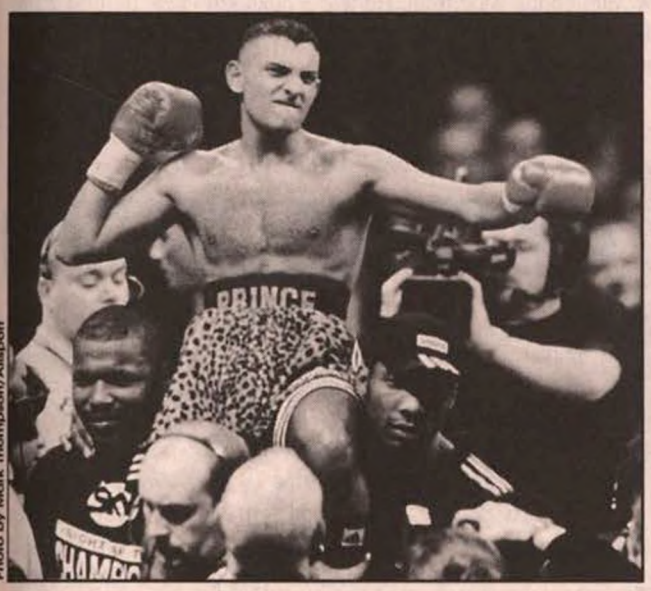


Photo by Mark Thompson/Allsport

Unbeaten featherweight Naseem Hamed was on top of the world after knocking out defending IBF featherweight champion Tom Johnson. Will American fans begin to acknowledge The Prince as a great fighter?

Was the ending of the March 1990 Julio Cesar Chavez-Meldrick Taylor fight among the 10 most controversial moments in boxing history? Referee Richard Steele stopped the fight with two seconds to go.

JEFF POTTER
Battleboro, VT

GREATNESS CONFIRMED

I'll admit the USA has the most talented fighters in the world, but American boxing fans make one big mistake, failing to acknowledge anyone who doesn't wear the red-white-and-blue. Naseem Hamed is an unusually gifted fighter, but because he hasn't fought in the USA, American fans make the mistake of ignoring him. Well, after Hamed's kayo win over Tom Johnson, who American fans had elevated as the best featherweight in the world, The Prince has established himself as a legitimate superstar. And still American fans refuse to give him his just due!

The UK has some of the most exciting fighters in the world, with Robin Reid, Lennox Lewis, and Hamed replacing Nigel Benn and Chris Eubank. THE RING has been generous in its coverage of these champions, but reading the letters to the editor, it seems American fans continue to shun them. Shame on you!

WALTER POTTERDAM
London, England

HEAVYWEIGHT TOP 10

Whoa! Managing Editor Nigel Collins' list of the all-time top-10 heavyweights (March 1997) was a little clouded. Evander Holyfield at number three? I have all the respect in the world for "The Real Deal," but there's no way you can put Holyfield ahead of Larry Holmes, George Foreman, Jack Johnson, etc. Doing so is an insult to such legends.

JEFF STEEN
Seattle, WA ■

ROUND ONE

DON JORDAN, 1934-1997

Former welterweight champion Don Jordan died on February 13 in a San Pedro, California, nursing home. He was 62.

Last September, Jordan, who worked as a longshoreman, was brutally beaten and robbed in a Los Angeles parking lot. He fell into a coma and never recovered.

Among the smoothest boxers of the '50s, Jordan fought almost exclusively in Los Angeles, where he grew up with 18 brothers and sisters. He won the California State lightweight title in 1954, and four years later was crowned world welterweight champion after outpointing Virgil Akins. He made two defenses before losing the crown to Benny Paret in 1960. In 1962, he retired with a career mark of 51-23-1 (17) with 1 no-contest. Among those he faced were Lauro Salas, Art Aragon, Paddy DeMarco, Jimmy Carter, Denny Moyer, Carmen Basilio, and Tony DeMarco.

Jordan: A champ who avoided the spotlight

"I remember first seeing Don in 1959, when he was welterweight champion and I was 11 years old," former lightweight king Mando Ramos told THE RING. "He'd drive down to the gym at the Teamsters Hall in his candy apple-red convertible.

"After he retired, I got to know him on the waterfront. He was a quiet guy, kept to himself. My wife and I would take him around to various boxing functions.

"I visited him in the hospital after the attack, and then in the nursing home. But he never came out of the coma.

"He was a good boxer and a good guy."

–Steve Farhood

Actis: Former light heavyweight contender

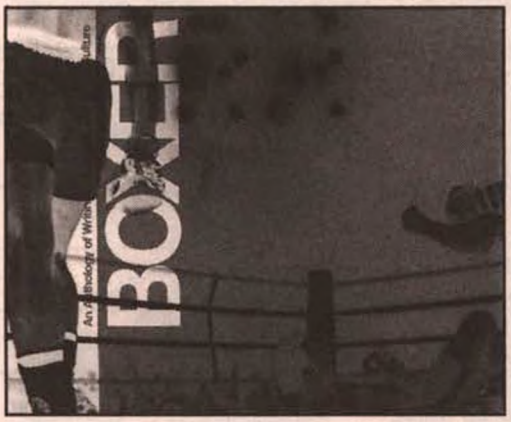
RAY ACTIS, 1911-1997

Ray Actis, a light heavyweight contender in the '30s, died of leukemia on February 14, in San Francisco. His passing came a day or two after our April '97 issue hit the newsstands. That's significant only because that issue of THE RING featured a story on the hard-punching 175-pounder, who, according to Billy Conn, hit him harder than Joe Louis.

Reports Pete Ehrmann, who profiled Actis for us, "Ray never got to see the story, but the gentle, modest 85-year-old man who wondered why anybody would want to write a story about him was buried with a copy of the magazine in his hands."

THE BOXING BOOKSHELF

A book that's different is always a welcome addition to the boxing bookshelf. I just wonder whether *Boxer: An Anthology Of Writings On Boxing And Visual Culture* (The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 135 pages, $20) isn't a bit *too* different for hard-core fans.



Visually, *Boxer* is most intriguing; despite the fact that THE RING was a major contributor, you've seen very few of the photos, posters, and film stills before. As for the writing, essays by a handful of contributors, including Joyce Carol Oates, tend to be esoteric. A variety of subjects are examined, from visual representation of boxing in early-18th century England, to boxing films in 20th century America, to women in boxing. A passage from the introduction is indicative of the flavor of the text:

"The boxer is a figure formed on this high-wire tension, caught between the experience of his immediate physical contest—his *living* in the ring—and the inner struggles of the individual and collective will. It is this interplay of forces—this image—that, during the early twentieth century, helped boxing become, arguably, the ultimate modernist spectacle and that conditioned the boxer's emergence as one of the most clearly delineated of all existential figures."

Clearly, *Boxer* isn't for everybody. But if you're fascinated by the meaning of boxing and its place in our society and culture, you just might find it a worthwhile read.

–Steve Farhood

THE 10 BOXING MOVIES TO WIN THE OSCAR FOR BEST PICTURE

10. *All The King's Men:* Gripping tale of the loyalty of a major promoter's employees and their daily confrontations with federal investigators. Broderick Crawford as Al Braverman.

9. *Hamlet:* Shakespearean classic includes promoter Bob Arum's soliloquy regarding the signing of an obese heavyweight ("To Bean or not to Bean ... ")

8. *An American In Paris:* Pernell Whitaker gets mugged under the Eiffel Tower by three WBC judges. Featuring Fred Flintstone as Lou Duva.

7. *The Last Emperor:* Story of WBC President-for-life Jose Sulaiman. Includes spectacular scenes in which Sulaiman canonizes himself when nobody else will.

6. *The Lost Weekend:* Dark tale of a superstar who suffers amnesia after every one of his losses. Starring Sugar Ray Leonard.

5. *Gone With The Wind:* Four-hour epic revolves around what happens to Atlanta junior welterweight Vernon Forrest's WBC rating when he refuses to sign with Don King.

4. *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest:* Method-to-their-madness acting highlights this intense study of a meeting of the IBF ratings committee. But why do all the characters wear hoods?

3. *Ghandi:* Film biography of the legendary pacifist who refused to fight back. Starring Oliver McCall.

2. *Midnight Cowboy:* Texas football player redefines Philadelphia's night life. Starring Tex Cobb as Tex Cobb.

1. *Lawrence Of Arabia:* Mesmerizing cinematography captures a 60-year-old Larry Holmes riding a camel across the Sahara en route to one last payday at a USA-televised club-show in Algiers.

"To Bean or not to Bean, that is the question"

WATCHING TV

We've decided to bring back our monthly feature on TV fights, in which we grade cable-televised main events, as well as all bouts aired on pay-per-view, premium channels, and commercial networks. Fights are graded in three categories. The division and network keys are listed below.

TV FIGHTS OF THE MONTH

Date	Winner/Loser	Network	Division	Significance	Matchup	Result
2-16-97	Hector Lopez W 10 Israel Cardona	ESPN2	jw	B	B+	B-
Previously unbeaten Cardona fails first real test						
2-18-97	Charles Brewer W 12 Greg Wright	USA	USBA sm	B	B-	C
Brewer saves title shot with easy win						
2-22-97	**Nate Miller KO 2 Alexander Gurov**	**Show**	**WBA c**	**A-**	**A-**	**C**
Big puncher Gurov floored thrice by unusually lively champ						
2-22-97	**Arturo Gatti W 12 Tracy Patterson**	**HBO**	**IBF jl**	**A**	**A**	**B**
Good scrap could've been a lot better had Tracy punched more						
2-22-97	Angel Manfredy W 12 Wilson Rodriguez	HBO	jl	B+	B+	B+
"El Diablo" becomes title threat with convincing victory						
2-22-97	James Toney W 12 Mike McCallum	ESPN	c	B+	B	C
Let's just hope that for these guys, three times is enough						
2-24-97	Arthur Johnson W 12 Sammy Stewart	Prime	fl	C+	B-	C+
Stewart's toughness is only redeeming value						
2-25-97	Jeremy Williams KO 1 Phil Jackson	USA	h	C	C+	D
Jackson drops from first clean shot						
3-1-97	**Steve Johnston W 12 Jean-Baptiste Mendy**	**ABC**	**WBC l**	**A**	**A-**	**B-**
Rally over last three rounds earns American the title						
3-1-97	Hector Camacho KO 5 Sugar Ray Leonard	PPV	m	B+	A-	C
Leonard looks every bit of 40 in disastrous comeback bout						
3-1-97	Robert Daniels W 12 Kenny Keene	PPV	c	B	A-	B
Keene wins first four rounds, Daniels the last six						
3-1-97	Orlando Canizales KO 3 Roland Gomez	PPV	jl	B-	C-	D
Loser takes bout on one week's notice and looks it						
3-1-97	Charles Murray W 10 Livingstone Bramble	PPV	jw	B-	C-	C-
Bramble now nothing more than a sponge for punches						
3-3-97	Jesus Chavez KO 6 Louie Leija	Fox	Vacant NABF jl	B	A-	A-
Slugfest all the way; Chavez the real goods						
3-4-97	Lonnie Bradley D 12 Otis Grant	USA	m	A-	A-	C+
Chess match; both fighters tentative throughout						
3-8-97	Johnny Tapia KO 3 Jorge Barrera	HBO	jb	B+	B-	C-
Marco Antonio's big bro runs till he drops						
3-8-97	**Danny Romero KO 6 Jaji Sibali**	**HBO**	**IBF jb**	**A-**	**B**	**B+**
Big-punching Romero looking for kayo all the way						
3-11-97	Rocky Gannon KO 5 Dominick Carter	USA	lh	B	A-	B+
Not as good as original, but still pretty wild						
3-14-97	Kevin Kelley W 12 Jesus Salud	ESPN	f	B+	B+	B-
Kelley boxes; it's more fun when he brawls						
3-17-97	Bolillo Gonzalez W 10 Hector Lopez	Prime	jw	B	A-	A-
Given their styles, this was a can't-miss fight						
3-18-97	Chris Byrd W 10 Bert Cooper	USA	h	B	B-	C+
Predictable; Cooper dangerous early, then poops out						

Category Explanation: "Significance"—The importance of the bout to the division and the fighters' futures; "Matchup"—The quality of the fighters and the prefight determination of how their styles will mesh; "Result"—How the bout turned out, from the viewer's perspective.

(World title fights in **bold** type)

Division key: h—heavyweight; c—cruiserweight; lh—light heavyweight; sm—super middleweight; m—middleweight; jm—junior middleweight; w—welterweight; jw—junior welterweight; l—lightweight; jl—junior lightweight; f—featherweight; jf—junior featherweight; b—bantamweight; jb—junior bantamweight; fl—flyweight; jfl—junior flyweight; s—strawweight

Network key: PPV—Pay-Per-View; Show—Showtime; Fox—Fox Sports (cable)

HOW MANY BATHROOMS WAS THAT?

News flash: Mike Tyson has put his home in Farmington, Connecticut, on the market. As a service to our readers, some of whom might be interested in moving into new digs, we're reprinting the info from a real estate ad for the house. We've even eliminated all those annoying abbreviations.

Owned by Mike Tyson. 56,000 square feet palatial estate. 20 bedrooms, 6 gourmet kitchens, 5 dining rooms, 4 conference rooms, theater, indoor Olympic pool, health club, racquetball court, dance club, elevator, 24 bathrooms and 14 half-bathrooms. $22,000,000.

Sounds ideal, especially if you have a hyperactive bladder.

THE PUNCHLINES

"This week, Riddick Bowe quit the Columbia Record and Tape Club. He couldn't handle the pressure of having to pick that one CD every month."
–HBO's Dennis Miller

"If I didn't believe I could whip Mike Tyson and Evander Holyfield on the same night, I would quit boxing right now."
–George Foreman, at the press conference announcing his bout with Lou Savarese

OUTSIDE THE ROPES

Terry Norris has been stripped of the IBF junior middleweight title because of his refusal to defend against mandatory challenger **Raul Marquez**. Norris will instead defend the WBC 154-pound title against **Felix Trinidad**. As we went to press, Marquez and **Anthony Stephens** were scheduled to clash for the vacant IBF title ... **Michael Buffer** is ready to rumble. The dapper ring announcer has charged Columbia Pictures with copyright infringement for the use of his trademarked phrase in the movie *Booty Call* ... According to a letter obtained by THE RING, **Sen. John McCain** (Arizona) and **Sen. Richard H. Bryan** (Nevada) have asked **Attorney General Janet Reno** to further investigate what a special report to the Oklahoma Labor Commissioner termed allegations of tax evasion, Social Security fraud, harboring of fugitives, transportation of fugitives across state lines, and forgery in the boxing industry in Oklahoma, Missouri, and other Midwestern states ... On March 10, former top-10 lightweight **Wesley Ramey**, 87, died of congestive heart failure in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Among others, Ramey defeated world champions **Tony Canzoneri**, **Johnny Jadick**, **Benny Bass**, **Battling Shaw**, **and Lew Jenkins**. Ramey, who never fought for a world title, compiled a mark of 116-26-9.

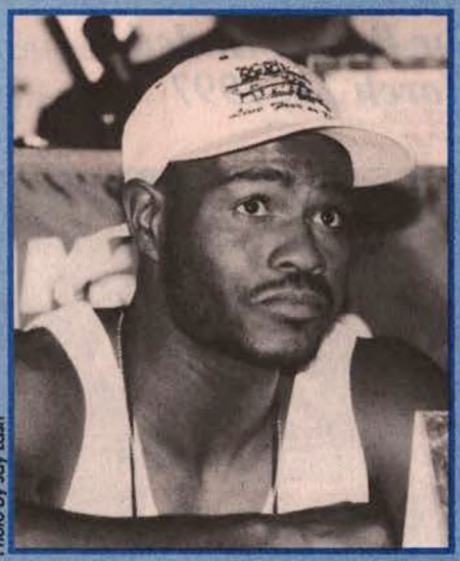
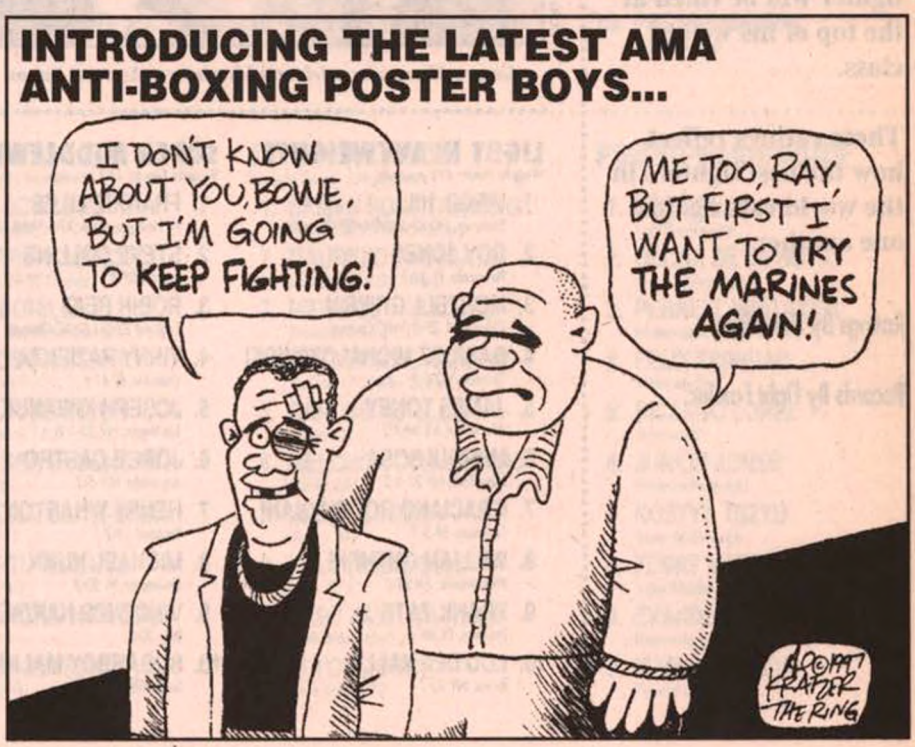


Photo by Jay Lash

Norris: No longer a unified champ

AL KRATZER'S VIEW



THE RING RATINGS

For Period Ended March 29, 1997

How Our Ratings Are Compiled

In each division, fighters are ranked according to their abilities and accomplishments.

Being champion does not necessarily mean a fighter will be rated at the top of his weight class.

These ratings reflect how the best fighters in the world rate against one another.

Ratings By The Editors

Records By Fight Fax Inc.

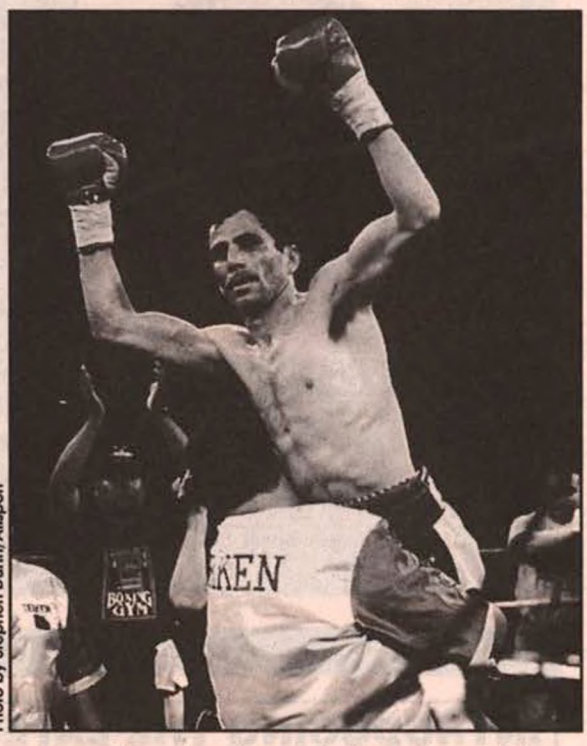


Photo by Stephen Dunn/Allsport

Genaro Hernandez celebrates his win over Azumah Nelson

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Unlimited

1. **EVANDER HOLYFIELD** — Fairburn, GA 33-3 (WBA Champ)
2. **LENNOX LEWIS** — England 30-1 (WBC Champ)
3. **MIKE TYSON** — Southington, OH 45-2
4. **MICHAEL MOORER** — Detroit, MI 37-1 (IBF Champ)
5. **ANDREW GOLOTA** — Chicago, IL 28-2
6. **RAY MERCER** — West Orange, NJ 24-4-1
7. **HENRY AKINWANDE** — England 31-0-1
8. **DAVID TUA** — Totowa, NJ 26-0
9. **RIDDICK BOWE** — Fort Washington, MD 40-1
10. **TIM WITHERSPOON** — Philadelphia, PA 45-5

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 190 pounds

1. **NATE MILLER** — Philadelphia, PA 29-4 (WBA Champ)
2. **ADOLPHO WASHINGTON** — Lexington, KY 26-3-2 (IBF Champ)
3. **MARCELO DOMINGUEZ** — Argentina 21-1-1 (WBC Champ)
4. **FABRICE TIOZZO** — France 35-1
5. **ROBERT DANIELS** — Miami, FL 36-3-1
6. **KENNY KEENE** — Emmett, ID 37-2
7. **JUAN CARLOS GOMEZ** — Germany 17-0
8. **DAVID IZEQWIRE** — Washington, D.C. 19-1
9. **TORSTEN MAY** — Germany 16-1
10. **YOSUKEZAN NISHIJIMA** — Japan 17-1

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 175 pounds

1. **VIRGIL HILL** — Bismarck, ND 43-1 (WBA/IBF Champ)
2. **ROY JONES** — Pensacola, FL 34-1
3. **MONTELL GRIFFIN** — Chicago, IL 27-0 (WBC Champ)
4. **DARIUSZ MICHALCZEWSKI** — Germany 32-0-1
5. **JAMES TONEY** — Ann Arbor, MI 54-3-2
6. **MERQUI SOSA** — New York, NY 27-5-2
7. **GRACIANO ROCCHIGIANI** — Germany 38-3-2
8. **WILLIAM GUTHRIE** — Philadelphia, PA 22-0
9. **FRANK TATE** — Houston, TX 36-4
10. **LOU DEL VALLE** — Bronx, NY 23-1

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 168 pounds

1. **FRANKIE LILES** — N. Hollywood, CA 29-1 (WBA Champ)
2. **STEVE COLLINS** — Ireland 35-3
3. **ROBIN REID** — England 22-0-1 (WBC Champ)
4. **VINNY PAZIENZA** — Cranston, RI 41-6
5. **JOSEPH KIWANUKA** — Las Vegas, NV 23-1-2
6. **JORGE CASTRO** — Argentina 101-5-2
7. **HENRY WHARTON** — England 25-2-1
8. **MICHAEL NUNN** — Davenport, IA 50-3
9. **VINCENZO NARDIELLO** — Italy 30-6
10. **SUGARBOY MALINGA** — South Africa 41-10

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 160 pounds

1. **BERNARD HOPKINS** — Philadelphia, PA 30-2-1 (IBF Champ)
2. **KEITH HOLMES** — Washington, D.C. 29-1 (WBC Champ)
3. **WILLIAM JOPPY** — Washington, D.C. 23-0-1 (WBA Champ)
4. **LONNIE BRADLEY** — New York, NY 25-0-1
5. **DANA ROSENBLATT** — Malden, MA 29-1
6. **OTIS GRANT** — Canada 28-1-1
7. **QUINCY TAYLOR** — Dallas, TX 26-4
8. **JOHN DAVID JACKSON** — Seattle, WA 35-2
9. **ROBERT McCRACKEN** — England 28-0
10. **BRIAN BARBOSA** — Providence, RI 22-3

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 154 pounds

1. **TERRY NORRIS**
   Mission Valley, CA 45-6 (WBC Champ)
2. **LAURENT BOUDOUANI**
   France 34-2 (WBA Champ)
3. **JULIO CESAR VASQUEZ**
   Argentina 56-3
4. **WINKY WRIGHT**
   St. Petersburg, FL 36-1
5. **CARL DANIELS**
   St. Louis, MO 37-2
6. **BRONCO McKART**
   Monroe, MI 31-2
7. **HECTOR CAMACHO**
   Orlando, FL 64-3
8. **RAUL MARQUEZ**
   Houston, TX 25-0
9. **EMMETT LINTON**
   Tacoma, WA 22-2
10. **ANTHONY STEPHENS**
    Shreveport, LA 28-7-2

WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 147 pounds

1. **PERNELL WHITAKER**
   Norfolk, VA 40-1-1 (WBC Champ)
2. **FELIX TRINIDAD**
   Puerto Rico 31-0 (IBF Champ)
3. **IKE QUARTEY**
   Ghana 33-0 (WBA Champ)
4. **JOSE LUIS LOPEZ**
   Mexico 38-3-1
5. **OBA CARR**
   Detroit, MI 37-2
6. **PATRICK CHARPENTIER**
   France 24-4
7. **WILFREDO RIVERA**
   Puerto Rico 22-2-1
8. **YORI BOY CAMPAS**
   Mexico 66-2
9. **ANDREI PESTRIAEV**
   Russia 20-1
10. **PATRICK COLEMAN**
    Chicago, IL 25-5

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 140 pounds

1. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Whittier, CA 23-0 (WBC Champ)
2. **KOSTYA TSZYU**
   Australia 18-0-1 (IBF Champ)
3. **KHALID RAHILOU**
   France 29-2 (WBA Champ)
4. **JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ**
   Mexico 97-2-1
5. **MIGUEL ANGEL GONZALEZ**
   Mexico 41-1
6. **CHARLES MURRAY**
   Rochester, NY 39-3
7. **FRANKIE RANDALL**
   Warren, OH 53-5-1
8. **RAFAEL RUELAS**
   Studio City, CA 48-3
9. **FRED PENDLETON**
   Miami, FL 41-21-4
10. **SOREN SONDERGAARD**
    Denmark 30-1

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 135 pounds

1. **PHILLIP HOLIDAY**
   South Africa 30-0 (IBF Champ)
2. **STEVE JOHNSTON**
   Denver, CO 21-0 (WBC Champ)
3. **ORZUBEK NAZAROV**
   Japan 23-0 (WBA Champ)
4. **GEORGE SCOTT**
   Pembroke Pines, FL 31-1
5. **SHANE MOSLEY**
   Pomona, CA 22-0
6. **IVAN ROBINSON**
   Delran, NJ 23-1
7. **JEAN-BAPTISTE MENDY**
   France 49-6-2
8. **JOHN-JOHN MOLINA**
   Puerto Rico 40-4
9. **LEAVANDER JOHNSON**
   Atlantic City, NJ 26-1-1
10. **ARTUR GRIGORJAN**
    Uzbekistan 22-0

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 130 pounds

1. **GENARO HERNANDEZ**
   Los Angeles, CA 35-1-1 (WBC Champ)
2. **ARTURO GATTI**
   Jersey City, NJ 25-1 (IBF Champ)
3. **AZUMAH NELSON**
   Ghana 39-4-2
4. **YONG SOO CHOI**
   South Korea 22-2 (WBA Champ)
5. **ROBERT GARCIA**
   Oxnard, CA 27-0
6. **JULIEN LORCY**
   France 34-0-1
7. **TRACY PATTERSON**
   Highland, NY 57-5-1
8. **GABE RUELAS**
   Arleta, CA 44-3
9. **ANATOLY ALEXANDROV**
   Kazakhstan 30-3
10. **ANGEL MANFREDY**
    Gary, IN 20-2-1

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 126 pounds

1. **NASEEM HAMED**
   England 25-0 (IBF Champ)
2. **LUISITO ESPINOSA**
   Philippines 40-7 (WBC Champ)
3. **TOM JOHNSON**
   Detroit, MI 45-3-1
4. **WILFREDO VAZQUEZ**
   Puerto Rico 49-7-3 (WBA Champ)
5. **KEVIN KELLEY**
   Flushing, NY 47-1-2
6. **EVER BELENO**
   Colombia 36-2
7. **WELCOME NCITA**
   South Africa 40-2
8. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
   Mexico 19-1
9. **MANUEL MEDINA**
   Mexico 52-8
10. **DERRICK GAINER**
    Pensacola, FL 19-4

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 122 pounds

1. **JUNIOR JONES**
   Brooklyn, NY 42-2
2. **DANIEL ZARAGOZA**
   Mexico 54-7-3 (WBC Champ)
3. **VUYANI BUNGU**
   South Africa 31-2 (IBF Champ)
4. **MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA**
   Mexico 43-1
5. **ANTONIO CERMENO**
   Venezuela 25-1 (WBA Champ)
6. **WAYNE McCULLOUGH**
   Las Vegas, NV 20-1
7. **KENNEDY McKINNEY**
   Memphis, TN 30-2-1
8. **ERIK MORALES**
   Mexico 25-0
9. **ENRIQUE SANCHEZ**
   Mexico 21-0
10. **ANGEL CHACON**
    Puerto Rico 23-0

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 118 pounds

1. **MBULELO BOTILE**
   South Africa 21-0 (IBF Champ)
2. **JORGE ELIECER JULIO**
   Colombia 35-1
3. **DAORUNG C. SIRIWAT**
   Thailand 58-5-1 (WBA Champ)
4. **SIRIMONGKOL SINGMANASUK**
   Thailand 13-0 (WBC Champ)
5. **NANA KONADU**
   Ghana 36-3
6. **PAULIE AYALA**
   Ft. Worth, TX 19-0
7. **ANCEE GEDEON**
   Westminster, CA 14-8-1
8. **VEERAPHOL SAHAPROM**
   Thailand 10-1
9. **ROBBIE REGAN**
   Wales 17-2-3
10. **PASTOR MAURIN**
    Argentina 33-0

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 115 pounds

1. **JOHNNY TAPIA**
   Albuquerque, NM 39-0-2
2. **DANNY ROMERO**
   Albuquerque, NM 30-1 (IBF Champ)
3. **GERRY PENALOSA**
   Philippines 35-1-1 (WBC Champ)
4. **HIROSHI KAWASHIMA**
   Japan 20-3-1
5. **YOKTHAI SITHOAR**
   Thailand 13-0 (WBA Champ)
6. **HYUNG CHUL LEE**
   South Korea 19-6
7. **ALIMI GOITIA**
   Venezuela 15-1
8. **HAROLD GREY**
   Colombia 21-2
9. **LUIS BOLANO**
   Colombia 23-0
10. **POLO SAUCEDO**
    Houston, TX 12-3-1

FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 112 pounds

1. **MARK JOHNSON**
   Washington, D.C. 30-1 (IBF Champ)
2. **YURI ARBACHAKOV**
   Japan 23-0 (WBC Champ)
3. **JOSE BONILLA**
   Venezuela 22-3 (WBA Champ)
4. **CARLOS SALAZAR**
   Argentina 43-7-3
5. **ARTHUR JOHNSON**
   East St. Louis, IL 14-3
6. **SAEN SOR PLOENCHIT**
   Thailand 26-1
7. **CHATCHAI ELITE-GYM**
   Thailand 24-1
8. **ALBERTO JIMENEZ**
   Mexico 32-4-3
9. **ALEJANDRO MONTIEL**
   Mexico 33-3
10. **JESPER JENSEN**
    Denmark 21-0

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 108 pounds

1. **SAMAN SORJATURONG**
   Thailand 33-2-1 (WBC Champ)
2. **MAURICIO PASTRANA**
   Colombia 16-0 (IBF Champ)
3. **MICHAEL CARBAJAL**
   Phoenix, AZ 44-3
4. **PHICHITNOI C. SIRIWAT**
   Thailand 17-1 (WBA Champ)
5. **CARLOS MURILLO**
   Panama 31-3
6. **MELCHOR COB CASTRO**
   Mexico 48-5-4
7. **JESUS CHONG**
   Mexico 30-7
8. **KEIJI YAMAGUCHI**
   Japan 21-2
9. **BABY JAKE MATLALA**
   South Africa 45-10-2
10. **HI YONG CHOI**
    South Korea 19-2

POUND-FOR-POUND

1. **ROY JONES**
   Light Heavyweight
2. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Junior Welterweight
3. **PERNELL WHITAKER**
   Welterweight
4. **FELIX TRINIDAD**
   Welterweight
5. **RICARDO LOPEZ**
   Strawweight
6. **JUNIOR JONES**
   Junior Featherweight
7. **KOSTYA TSZYU**
   Junior Welterweight
8. **TERRY NORRIS**
   Junior Middleweight
9. **EVANDER HOLYFIELD**
   Heavyweight
10. **MARK JOHNSON**
    Flyweight

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April 1984: Sugar Ray Leonard: "I'm Gonna Be Better Than Ever!" Plus: Ratings of 8,000 fighters, Henry Armstrong, Don Lee, Koji Kobayashi, Mancini-Chacon (color).

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July 1984: Bazooka's Aim Is True: Gomez Shoots Down LaPorte In The Battle For San Juan. Plus: Michael Spinks, Vinny Pazienza, Tyrone Crawley, Leonard's comeback, Chandler-Sandoval, Hagler-Roldan.

Aug. 1984: Olympic Special: Mark Breland Leads A Strong Squad. Plus: Leonard-Howard, Davila-Sanchez, Bonecrusher-Bruno, Bramble-Mancini, Hatcher-Bumphus, Garza-Orozco.

Oct. 1984: The Beast From The East: John Mugabi Strikes Terror Into The Hearts Of Men. Plus: Olympics, Bill Costello, Davey Moore, Wilfred Benitez, King's heavyweights.

Dec. 1984: Hagler Hammers Hamsho. Plus: Barry McGuigan, boxing's best, James Broad, Julian Jackson, Pinklon Thomas.

Jan. 1985: Holmes-Bonecrusher Color Action. Plus: Gerry Cooney, pro debuts (Breland, Hill, Taylor, Biggs, Whitaker, Holyfield), Santos-Medal, Meza-Garza.

Feb. 1985: Showdown: Page Clobbers Coetzee For WBA Title. Plus: Larry Holmes, lightweights, Cooney-Chaplin, McCallum-Minchillo.

April 1985: Special Hagler-Hearns Program. Plus: British fighters, Hector Camacho, Donald Curry, Sonny Liston.

May 1985: The Rematch In Reno: Bramble-Mancini Color Action. Plus: Donald Curry, Aaron Pryor, McGuigan-LaPorte.

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July 1985

July 1985: Marvelous Marvin! Are There Any More Mountains To Climb? Plus: Chavez, Tyson, Tubbs, Sullivan, great first rounds.

Aug. 1985: Seven Elected To The Ring Hall Of Fame (Jose Napoles, Jake LaMotta, Panama Al Brown, Manuel Ortiz, Young Stribling, Thomas Jackling, Lord Lonsdale). Plus: Spinks-Holmes preview, Barry McGuigan.

Sept. 1985: Barry McGuigan: Can He Be Boxing's Savior? Plus: Truth Williams, Tyrell Biggs, Greg Richardson, Julio Cesar Chavez, Paul-Blake, Witherspoon-Bonecrusher, Berbick-Bey, Pinklon Thomas.

Oct. 1985: The "Macho Man" Rides Again. Plus: Jeff Fenech, Berbick-Green, John E. Garcia, Dwight Muhammad Qawi, McCallum-Braxton.

Nov. 1985: Will Hagler Feast On The Beast? Plus: Hagler-Mugabi & Hearns-Shuler previews, Lonnie Smith, Pintor-Meza, Chuck Hull, Benitez-Moley.

Dec. 1985: Michael Spinks: Against All Odds. Plus: Curry-McCrory preview, McGuigan-Taylor, Alexis Arguello, Michael Olajide, Chavez-Pratchett.

Jan. 1986: In Search Of A Heavyweight Champion. Plus: Azumah Nelson, Arguello-Jefferson, Olympic update, Chicago boxing.

Feb. 1986: Mike Tyson: The Legacy Of Cus D'Amato. Plus: Rocky IV, Curry-McCrory, Teddy Mann, Kenny Lane.

March 1986 (Awards Issue): Co-Fighters Of The Year: Marvelous Marvin Hagler & Donald Curry. Plus: Ring's Annual Awards, Evander Holyfield, Williamson-Muhammad, Camacho-Roach, 1985 boxing diary.

April 1986: Witherspoon Tames Tubbs For WBA Title. Plus: Dream fights, Greg Haugen, Tyrell Biggs, Mark Breland, Paul Gonzales, HBO tourney, Witherspoon-Tubbs, Frank Warren, Gene Tunney.

May 1986: Marvelous Marvin Tames The Beast. Plus: Hearns-Shuler, Mike Tyson, Bramble-Crawley, Sandoval-Canizales, Marvin Johnson, McGuigan-Cabrera, Arguello-Costello, Weaver-Williams.

June 1986: Barry's Back In The USA: McGuigan Breathes A Breath Of Fresh Air Into American Fight Scene. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Robbie Sims, Qawi-Holyfield preview, Berbick-Thomas, Bruno-Coetzee.

July 1986: Spinks-Holmes II: Who Really Won? Plus: Frank Bruno, Richie Sandoval, Kevin Watts, Tyson-Tillis, Boza-Edwards-Alli, Johnson-Burns.

Aug. 1986: Is Sugar Ray Still Sweet? Plus: Lloyd Honeyghan, Tyson-Green, Cooney-Gregg, Hall of Fame (Eder Jofre, Benny Lynch, Bud Taylor, Sam McVey, Nat Langham, John Chambers), Bernardo Pinango.

Sept. 1986: Gerry Cooney vs. Mike Tyson: Who Would Win? Plus: Cruz-McGuigan, Hearns-Medal, Tyson-Gross, Sims-Duran.

Dec. 1986: The Weekend That Shook The Boxing World. Rosario-Bramble & Honeyghan-Curry. Plus: Butch Lewis interview, Buster Drayton, Hector Camacho, Jake LaMotta.

April 1987: Hagler-Leonard Souvenir Issue. Plus: Czyz, Orlando Canizales, Mugabi-Thomas, Biggs-Snipes, Chavez-LaPorte, Bonecrusher-Witherspoon II, Haugen-Paul.

May 1987: Mike Tyson: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awards, *The Ring* annual ratings, Louie Espinoza, Herol Graham.

June 1987: Vinny Paz: Phenom Or Phony? Plus: Tyson-Bonecrusher, Mark Breland, Brian Mitchell, Holyfield, Czyz-Edwards, Olajide-Lee, Curry-Montgomery.

July 1987: Spinks-Cooney: The Fight That Refused To Die. Plus: The new *Ring* ratings, Terry Marsh, George Foreman's return, Khaosai Galaxy, Hearns-Andries, Whitaker-Mayweather.

Aug. 1987: Sugar Ray: Still In Style. Plus: Leonard-Hagler, all-time heavyweight ratings, Czyz-MacDonald, Camacho-Davis.

Sept. 1987: Michael Olajide: The Look Of The Future? Plus: Tyson-Thomas, Jeff Fenech, middleweight muddle, Tsuyoshi Hamada, Juan Roldan, Harold Knight.

Nov. 1987: Tyson Wins Heavyweight Triple Crown. Plus: McCallum-Curry, Carlos Monzon interview, triple champions, Orlin & Terry Norris, Ramirez-Alli, Fenech-Richardson, Matthew Hilton.

Dec. 1987: Spinks & Lewis: Boxing's Beastie Boys. Plus: Starling-Breland, Ramzi Hassan, Honeyghan-Hatcher, Holyfield-Ocasio.

Jan. 1988: Darrin Van Horn-Million Dollar Baby? Plus: Evander Holyfield, Hill-Stewart, Juan Coggi, great hookers, AIDS.

Feb. 1988: Gold Outshines Glitter: Tate Tops Olajide. Plus: Tyson-Biggs, Kalambay-Barkley, Hearns-Roldan, fights we'd like to see.

March 1988: Thomas "Hit Man" Hearns: "Now I Own History." Plus: Rocky Lockridge & Roger Mayweather, Panama, Tony Burton, Chavez-Rosario, Gervacio-Espinoza, Vaca-Honeyghan.

April 1988: Evander Holyfield: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Special year-end awards, Holyfield-Qawi II, Foreman-Sekorski, Hill-Angulo.

May 1988: George Foreman: "I Can Beat Tyson." Plus: Tyson-Holmes, Jesse Benavides, Showtime, no-knockout artists.

Aug. 1988: Julio Cesar Chavez: The Kid From Culiacan. Plus: Holyfield, bad decisions, Lockridge-Knight, Starling-Breland II, Brown-Trice, Haugen-Santana.

Sept. 1988: Sugar Ray: Here He Comes Again! Plus: Andries-Czyz, Kid Chocolate, Don Dunphy, Don Lalonde.

Oct. 1988: Mike Tyson: What Price Glory? Plus: Tyson-Spinks, Hearns-Barkley, Davey Moore.

Nov. 1988: Donny Lalonde: "Sugar Ray Is Out Of His Mind!" Plus: Hall of Fame selections (Carlos Ortiz, Joe Brown, Billy Graham, Cus D'Amato, Jimmy Jacobs), Nunn-Tate, Molinares-Starling, Honeyghan-Chung, '88 Olympians.

Jan. 1989: Meldrick Taylor: Philly Phenom. Plus: Marvin Hagler, Alex Wallau, Taylor-McGirt, Olympic results.

Feb. 1989: Julio Cesar Chavez. Plus: Chavez-Ramirez, all-time lightweight ratings, Louie Espinoza, Simon Brown, Roger Mayweather.

March 1989: Hearns Next For Sugar Ray? Plus: Leonard-Lalonde, Prince Charles Williams, Hearns-Kinchen, Nunn-Roldan, Hines-Hilton.

May 1989: The Best Of '88. Plus: Year-end awards, Evander Holyfield, Pryor-Morales, Fenech-Navarro.

Jan. 1990: Boxing's Bible Reborn At Age 68. Plus: Carlos Monzon, Mike Tyson, Leonard-Duran, Daniel Zaragoza, Nunn-Barkley, Whitaker-Ramirez, George Foreman (color).

Feb. 1990: Mike Tyson: Riddick Bowe & Ray Mercer Take Aim. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Gerry Cooney, Chuck Wepner, Antonio Esparragoza, Roman-Laciar.

March 1990: The '80s—Great Fights, Great Fighters (color). Plus: Jeff Harding, Evander Holyfield, Pete Rademacher, Sharkey-McCoy.

April 1990: Pernell Whitaker: Fighter Of The Year (color). Plus: Tiger Flowers, Duran-Leonard, Chavez-Taylor preview, Jorge Paez, Ali-Cooper.

May 1990: Big George Talks Tough: "Tyson Won't Be That Difficult!" Plus: Ed Hopson, Russian fighters, grudge wars, Archie Moore, Kid Berg, Marcel Cerdan, Chavez-Cortes.

June 1990: Buster! How James Douglas Shocked The World. Plus: Michael Moorer, Camacho-Paez, Tommy Farr, Excuses, Dick Tiger, Ruben Olivares-Jeff Chandler.

July 1990: "I'm Hungrier Than Ever Before," By Evander Holyfield. Plus: James Toney, Buddy McGirt, Glenwood Brown, Aaron Davis, Michael Carbajal, Jorge Paez, Kid Gavilan, Mark Breland, Ali-Liston II (color).

Aug. 1990: Chavez: His Greatness Confirmed ... Is He The Best Mexican Fighter Ever? Plus: Matthew Saad Muhammad, John L. Sullivan & Mike Tyson, Michael Nunn, Mark Breland, Harold Johnson, Cus D'Amato, Louis-Godoy (color).

Sept. 1990: Marvin Hagler-Can He Resist The Irresistible Temptation? Plus: Thomas Hearns, Sanchez-Saddler, Paul Banke, puncher vs. chin, Beau Jack, Robinson-LaMotta (color).

Oct. 1990: Rocky Graziano—Thanks For The Memories. Plus: Aaron Pryor, Junior Jones, Mike Tyson, Chris Eubank, Wolgast-Nelson, Hall of Fame.

Nov. 1990: Tyson vs. Foreman. Can Iron Mike Stop The Blast From The Past? Plus: Bruce Seldon, best chins, Sullivan-Kilrain (color), Azumah Nelson, LaStarza.

Dec. 1990: Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Douglas-Holyfield preview, Julio Cesar Chavez, Joe Grim, Whitaker-Nazario, Rosi-Van Horn, Benny Leonard, Douglas-Tyson (color).

Jan. 1991: Boxing's Baddest Bad Boy: Nigel Benn Plays By His Own Rules. Plus: Roberto Duran, Kid Akeem, Jose Napoles, Jimmy Carruthers, LaMotta-Zale, Dempsey-Willard (color).

Feb. 1991: Boxing On TV—Now You'll Pay! Plus: Ismael Laguna, Tommy Morrison in *Rocky V*, Reggie Tuur, Chiquita Gonzalez, Harold Green, Joe Louis.

March 1991: Hunger! It Made Evander A

Champ, But ... Plus: Dempsey-Firpo, Charles Murray, Khaosai Galaxy, Nunn-Curry, Henry Armstrong, Sonny Liston (color).

April 1991: Julio Cesar Chavez—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Tyson-Stewart, James Leija, Wilfred Benitez, Pedro Decima, Moore-Bassey.

May 1991: All-Frazier I: 20 Years Late, Still The Fight Of The Century (color). Plus: fighting at home, Mark McPherson, George Costner, Rolando Pascua, Tony Canzoneri.

June 1991: Pain, Frustration, Confidence, And Hope: Meldrick Taylor's Life After Chavez. Plus: Foreman-Holyfield preview, Norris-Leonard, David Kamau, Freddie Steele, Bennie Briscoe, Leonard's career (color).

July 1991: Tyson's Title Hopes: He Ain't What He Used To Be...But It's Not Gonna Matter. Plus: Eusebio Pedroza, Myung Woo Yuh, Willie Meshan, Hearns-Hill preview, computer junior welterweight tournament, Gomez-Fenech, controversial heavyweight finishes (color).

Aug. 1991: Foreman Gives Holyfield A Fight ... And The World A Thrill (color). Plus: Making weight, Harry Greb, Kevin Kelley, Louis-Conn I, Simon Brown-Blocker, Chavez-Duplessis, Sugar Ray Robinson.

Oct. 1991: A Hit Again-How Far Can Thomas Hearns Go? Plus: Battling Levinsky, Oba Carr, Dave McAuley, Muhammad Ali, Lou Ambers, Luther McCarty, ethnic matchups, computer light heavy tournament, Cerdan-Hagler, Rocky Marciano (color).

Nov. 1991: Mike Tyson's Fight For Greatness—Will November 8 Be His Moment? Plus: Edwin Rosario, Jeff Fenech, overrated/underrated, Giardello-Graham, Lennox Lewis, Marcel Cerdan, Leonard-Hearns I, heavyweight computer tournament, Ali portrait (color).

Dec. 1991: Evander Holyfield vs. Mike Tyson: Who Will Win And Why. Plus: Eddie Aliano, Jack Britton, Muhammad Ali, Pernell Whitaker, rating the 44 world champions, Marcel Cerdan, Henry Cooper, Ezzard Charles-Jersey Joe Walcott (color).

Jan. 1992: Our Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Jerry Quarry, Julio Cesar Chavez, Mysterious Billy Smith, Joey Gamache, moving up in weight, Billy Conn-Michael Spinks, Joe Louis (color).

May 1992: James Toney—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Myung Woo Yuh, Khaosai Galaxy, Rocky Graziano, Billy Soose, Roy Jones, James Warring, Duran-Chavez, Marvin Hagler (color).

June 1992: What Now? Boxing Without Mike Tyson. Plus: Buck Smith, Liston-Foreman, Billy Graham, Holmes-Mercer, Enrique Pinder, Hilario Zapata, Toney-Tiberi, Benny Lynch, Tony DeMarco, Tyson centerfold (color).

July 1992: Does Larry Holmes Deserve A Title Shot? Plus: Nelson-Fenech II, Tracy Patterson, Kelley-Dorsey, fat fighters, Buchanan-Camacho, Holmes-Ali (color).

Aug. 1992: Holyfield-Holmes Prefight. Holmes: "I See Me Takin' Holyfield Outta There." Plus: Iran Barkley, Herbie Hide, George Foreman, Tex Cobb, Carnival of Champions, Harry Greb, Haugen-Mancini, Oscar De La Hoya, Gene Tunney (color).

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Feb. 1993: America's Tribute To The Brown Bomber: Joe Louis. Plus: Virgil Hill, Junior Jones, Roger Mayweather, Chicago boxing, Orlando Zulueta, Jose Napoles (color).

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NEW FACES

BRANDON MITCHEM

Welterweight

By Robert Mladinich

Although he's only 19 years old and in the embryonic stages of his professional career, it seems like welterweight Brandon Mitchem has devoted a lifetime to becoming a world champion. The way he sees it, winning a title should be a mere formality—once he gets a chance to fight for it. While such sentiment might seem awfully bold coming from a youngster with half-a-dozen fights, nothing could be further from the truth.

Mitchem has been working toward his goal for as long as he can remember. In fact, he was born into the game. His father Randy is a former pro, and his mother Carol, a native of Taiwan, is an accomplished judge and referee. Mitchem has been lacing 'em up since he was five years old and accompanying his father on his daily excursions to the gym, first in Philadelphia, and then in Lincolnton, North Carolina, where the younger Mitchem spent most of his formative years.

Randy was a journeyman welterweight and junior middleweight who campaigned throughout the '80s, tangling with the likes of Johnny Bumphus, Ronnie Shields, Terry Marsh, and Simon Brown. He retired with a record of 28-15 (14).

The elder Mitchem says he didn't encourage his son to box, but didn't quite discourage him either. He thought his son would focus on baseball because Brandon excelled as a second baseman. But the youngster was hooked on boxing from the very first day he saw the inside of a gym.

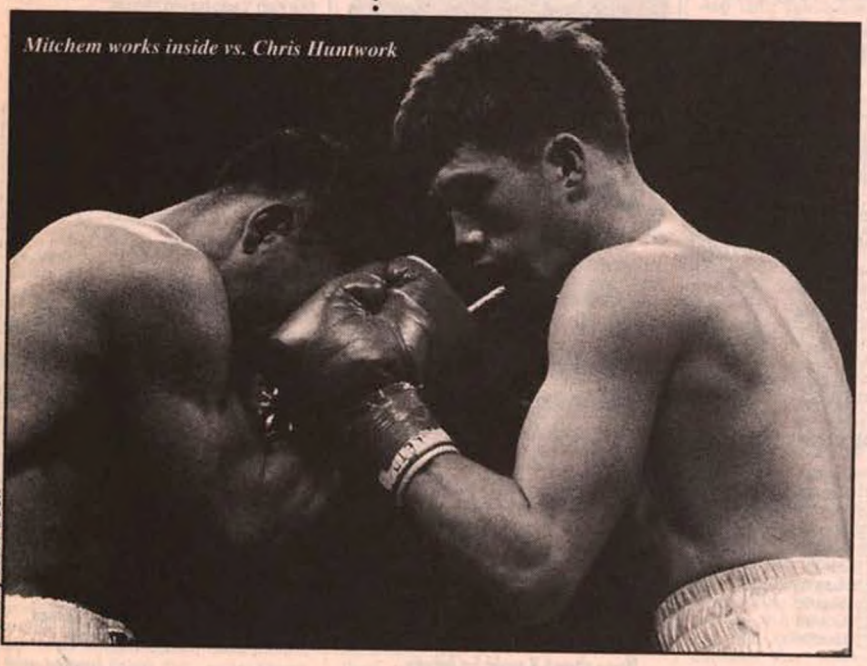
"At first he just wanted to be like his dad, but he picked up the skills so quick," says Randy. "We always had a gym at the house, and Brandon would spend hours practicing, pretending he was Muhammad Ali. All I ever

(Continued on page 52)

PRO RECORD

1996		
July 13	Jose Hernandez, Denver	W 4
Aug. 12	Leon Hinnant, Saratoga Springs, NY	KO 1
Sept. 16	Daniel Zurita, Las Vegas	KO 2
Dec. 3	Chris Huntwork, Indio, CA	KO 4
1997		
Jan. 17	Francisco Mendez, Reseda, CA	W 4
Feb. 25	Charles Anaya, Long Beach, CA	KO 4

FIGHTS	WON	LOST	DREW	KOs
6	6	0	0	4



Mitchem works inside vs. Chris Huntwork

Photo by Brent Cook

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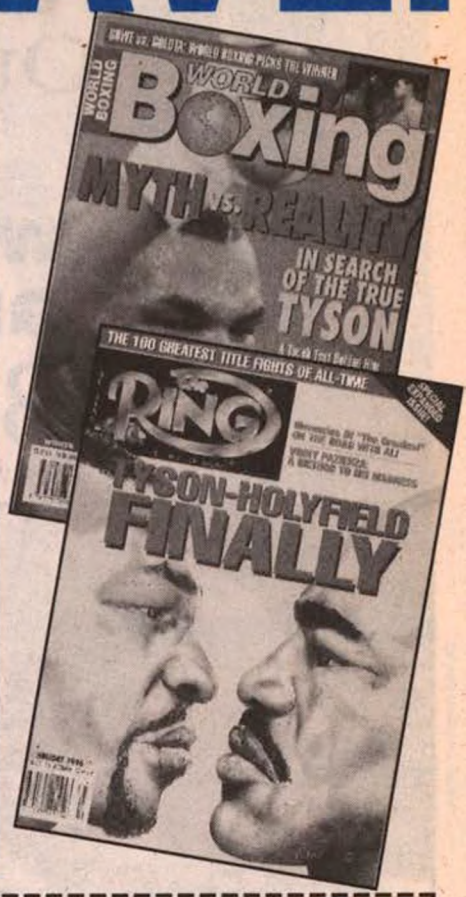

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RYAN OUT LOUD

By Jeff Ryan

WITH UNDYING GRATITUDE

Black tie and (tall) tales. That sums up Sugar Ray Leonard's initial retirement announcement, delivered at a Baltimore Civic Center gala in 1982. Whether he believes it or not, Leonard could have kept the promise he made to quit that night—thereby denying himself and us the upset of Marvin Hagler and the conquering of divisions three, four, and five—and we would have labeled him an immortal and thanked the boxing gods for the five unforgettable years his star-spangled stage show played.

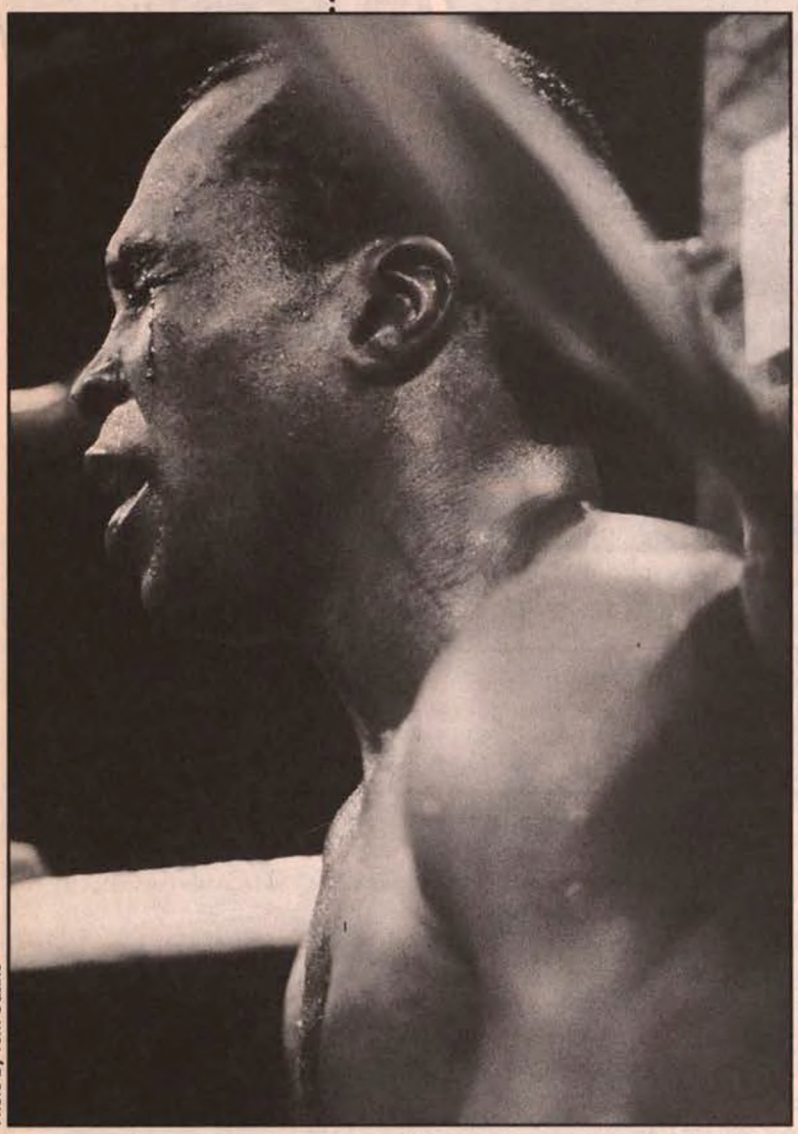


Photo by Tom Casino

Sugar Ray Leonard's comeback was painful both for the former champion and the paying public. Worse yet, Leonard, a kayo victim against Hector Camacho, wants to fight some more.

As far back as Leonard's first trumpeted return, against Kevin Howard in '84, surprised Sugar connoisseurs were posing the following question: Taking into consideration Leonard's intelligence, pride, perfectionism, surgically repaired left eye, millions in career earnings, Olympic gold medal, and wins over all-time greats like Hearns, Duran, and Benitez, didn't he always seem the least likely old-timer to ever put his rump and his rep at stake again? You bet your ass he did.

Boxing is a screwy sport to understand, isn't it? The more time you log around it and the more insight you gain, the harder it is to predict. Take, for instance, the cases of Hagler and Michael Spinks. If there were ever two guys who seemed as certain to reject the institution of retirement as Leonard did to embrace it, they would have to be Sugar's '87 nemesis and his '76 Olympic teammate. In Hagler and Spinks, we're talking about two incredibly proud warriors who ended brilliant careers on such downbeats that it's a wonder they could ever get a sound night's sleep again.

No matter how wrong he is, an infuriated and bitter Hagler truly believes he was fleeced by the judges when he dropped a split decision to Leonard at Caesars Palace. Marvelous thinks it wasn't Leonard's jabs in the face that spelled his doom as much as it was the boxing establishment's knives in the back. And Spinks, who was one of the greatest light heavyweight titlists in history, and the first 175-pound king to move up and capture the game's biggest prize, walks around knowing he is remembered by much of the mainstream only as the poor accident victim who was mowed down by Mike Tyson on the fiercest,

finest night of Iron Mike's prime.

You might say that neither Hagler nor Spinks has anything to prove by coming back. But if fighters who retire on a happy note regularly return to deal with business only they perceive as unfinished, then it's hard to believe Hagler and Spinks wouldn't have motivation to return and exorcise their *real* demons. On top of that, they are two guys who truly loved their craft and didn't mind training. Hagler and Spinks not coming back in the '90s ranks with Tyson's losses to Buster Douglas and Evander Holyfield and George Foreman's regaining of the heavyweight crown on the list of the biggest surprises of the decade.

Hagler and Spinks have certainly had chances to fill their savings accounts with more money and their ears with more intoxicating cheers. Leonard, after all, has been trying to lure Marvelous into a rematch for a decade. (Sugar's two most recent comebacks were said to be motivated at least in part by the hope of securing such a sequel.) And during an interview with me in '92, Spinks revealed that he was actually planning a comeback. After we said goodbye that day, I never heard another word about it.

And for that, Spinks has my sincerest thanks. In fact, I'd like to send both him and Hagler a thank-you card the size of a billboard on Sunset Boulevard. They deserve it for not joining the Washed-Up Warriors World Tour. (Coming to a state with a lenient athletic commission near you.) They deserve it for not playing us for suckers, for not coming back and trampling all over their award-winning scripts while trying to erase bad final scenes.

Thanks, Marvelous, for not doing all the things Leonard did on the fright night of March 1. Like pumping new life into the career of somebody like Hector Camacho, one of the most unlikable creeps I've had the misfortune of meeting in 13 years on the beat. And like making the middleweight version of the cautious and light-hitting "Macho Man" suddenly look like Tony Zale. Thanks, too, for not predicting victory for weeks, hiding an injury, turning in a career-worst performance, and then insulting every ticketbuyer and pay-per-view viewer by saying, "I fought better than I thought I could fight."

Hey, Michael, thank *you* for not adding to the heavyweight division's collection of enlarged midsections and enlarged prostates by charging back into the middle of the chaos. Thanks for not torturing us with Spinks-Larry Holmes III, yet another forum for poor old Larry to tell us what the big bad judges and the ghost of Rocky Marciano did to him when you beat him for the title. Thanks for not putting your great personality at risk by getting whacked in the head again. And gracias for not giving your promoter, that arrogant windbag, Butch Lewis, the chance to be a major voice in the game again.

Thanks to both of you guys for not making the purists feel stupid yet again. Do you know how dumb we feel when we discover that we value some great champions' records and reputations far more than the fighters do themselves? Trying to tell guys not to come back, we often feel like cops trying to tell a nut on a bridge not to jump. He may have no respect for himself, but someone has to look out for him.

When a TV show like *Friends* is successful, it inevitably spawns a half-dozen shows trying to look and sound just like it. And once Foreman showed that a fossil in the right place at the right time *could* work miracles, a stampede of fooled fistic fortysomethings followed. It's too tiring to keep getting mad at Leonard, Foreman, Holmes, Carlos Palomino, and the other greedy graybeards. But for any of us who admire extraordinary careers, it isn't easy to just throw up our hands and say, "Ah, the hell with it," either. Leonard may be willing to get carried out of the ring on a stretcher one day, but the sight of his head being snapped by Camacho and then cradled by referee Joe Cortez bothered *me* quite a bit, okay? It's nice to know, however, that at least two former champions won't be subjecting their bodies and images to the same kind of punishment.

Yeah, Michael, your last outing *was* a bad loss. But better to be annihilated by Tyson in '88 than, say, Jesse Ferguson in '94. And, yeah, Marvelous, Leonard *did* run a lot in your showdown. But you know what? At least you looked like Marvin Hagler that night, and not a slow-motion replay of him.

Neither of you guys get any ink or attention these days, two nutrients we have long been told fighters need to survive. So here's a little bit of both. As for the cheers, well, when this column is finished, be assured that I am rising from my desk chair and giving you both a standing ovation. ■

Photo by Scott Romer

Michael Spinks, shown with longtime promoter Butch Lewis, has threatened to join the long list of comebacking former champions, but he's resisted the temptation. Spinks' last fight, a kayo loss to Mike Tyson, came in 1988.

THE RING'S QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH

Compiled by Thad Moore

Q: WILL LENNOX LEWIS BECOME THE BEST FIGHTER IN THE DIVISION, OR WILL HE TURN OUT TO BE JUST ANOTHER LIMITED BRITISH HEAVYWEIGHT?

Eddie Futch, trainer: "Lewis is at the head of the class. He has the equipment to be successful. He has the right height, reach, and power to win in the division. He could very well be the number-one heavyweight in the world.

"Lewis should use the jab and set up his opponents with combinations. He can use a good hook off the jab. In the [Frank] Bruno fight, he was losing big, and then he hit Bruno with a big left hook and won the fight. He could also utilize an uppercut. If he makes use of the jab, he can set up his combinations better. Emanuel Steward [Lewis' trainer] will do a good job in polishing things up.

"Lewis has a good left hand. He's a big man. I'd like to see him at 245; he'd be better off at that weight. He would have more mobility. I think he could beat Mike Tyson. Tyson has always had trouble with tall men. If Lewis kept Tyson in the center of the ring, I think he'd beat him.

"Lewis would beat Evander Holyfield, too. He's too fast and has too much equipment for Holyfield. Lewis has fair defensive skills, but his chin isn't too great. I think Oliver McCall proved that [in their first fight]. He has the best jab in the division. For today's crop of heavyweights, he has what it takes to be the number-one man."

WBC heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis with trainer Emanuel Steward. Says Hall of Fame trainer Eddie Futch, "[Lewis] could very well be the number-one heavyweight in the world."

Q: IS THERE ANYONE IN THE LIGHTWEIGHT DIVISION WHO COULD REKINDLE THE INTEREST OF THE '80s?

Carl Moretti, matchmaker for Main Events: "Phillip Holiday is the best of the lightweights. He doesn't do anything great, he just doesn't do anything wrong. All he does is win. He's probably the best-conditioned athlete in sports, making up for any faults he may have. He is relentless. He's like a Troy Dorsey with talent.

"Holiday isn't anywhere near as good as a Roberto Duran, or lightweights from other eras. I don't see him reigning for three or four years, like Pernell Whitaker did. His work rate per round, but not his overall skill, reminds me of Henry Armstrong. Stylewise, you think he's an easy guy to fight because he walks straight to you. He's deceiving. He uses angles well and keeps his chin tucked in when he's moving forward. He's not that easy to hit.

"He keeps his hands up and is constantly throwing punches. He outworks you. I don't think he has much power, but the sheer volume of punches bothers guys. He just keeps coming and wears you down. People underestimate how many punches he throws. And he's one of the best bodypunchers in the sport today. He starts to the body, then goes back to the head. A tall lefty who boxes on the outside, a real stinker, might give him trouble."

What do boxing's insiders think of the hot issues? Each month, we'll come up with four questions, then grill the experts. If there's a topic you'd like examined, send your question to The Ring, Questions Of The Month, P.O. Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034

Q: WHO HAS THE BEST JAB IN BOXING?

Alton Merkerson, trainer: Naseem Hamed has a very good jab. He shoots his jab from different angles, angles you don't usually see. You don't know where it's coming from. He is very elusive and hard to hit. He has a lot of speed in his jab, and he's been able to integrate it into his arsenal.

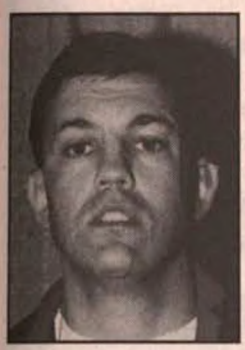
"He has a confusing jab. Most fighters shoot the jab from the waist or shoulder. He shoots it five different ways. There is no such thing as a correct jab, as long as it is legal. He keeps people at bay to set his punches up. He won't knock you down with it, but he can land it effectively. He keeps other fighters away with the jab. It is difficult to defend.

"Virgil Hill is another guy with a good jab. Hill wins most of his fights with the jab. He uses it to hurt other fighters. He is more offensive-minded with it. He throws it with power. He cocks it and telegraphs it when he throws it, but he lands it with regularity. He is always throwing it. He frustrates other fighters with the jab.

"He uses a double-jab to set up his power-punches. He wins rounds with the jab. He is always throwing it. He mixes up using soft jabs with hard jabs. He scores with it, but can't knock you out. Hill definitely concentrates on the jab. He uses it to the utmost. It has been his most used and effective punch since he's been a pro. He's won so many fights by just using his left jab. It is his most important tool."

You might not associate powerpuncher Naseem Hamed with a good jab, but as trainer Alton Merkerson points out, the southpaw's lead right, shown against Daniel Alicea, is a significant weapon.

Q: WAS THE HECTOR CAMACHO-SUGAR RAY LEONARD FIGHT ANOTHER BLACK EYE FOR BOXING?

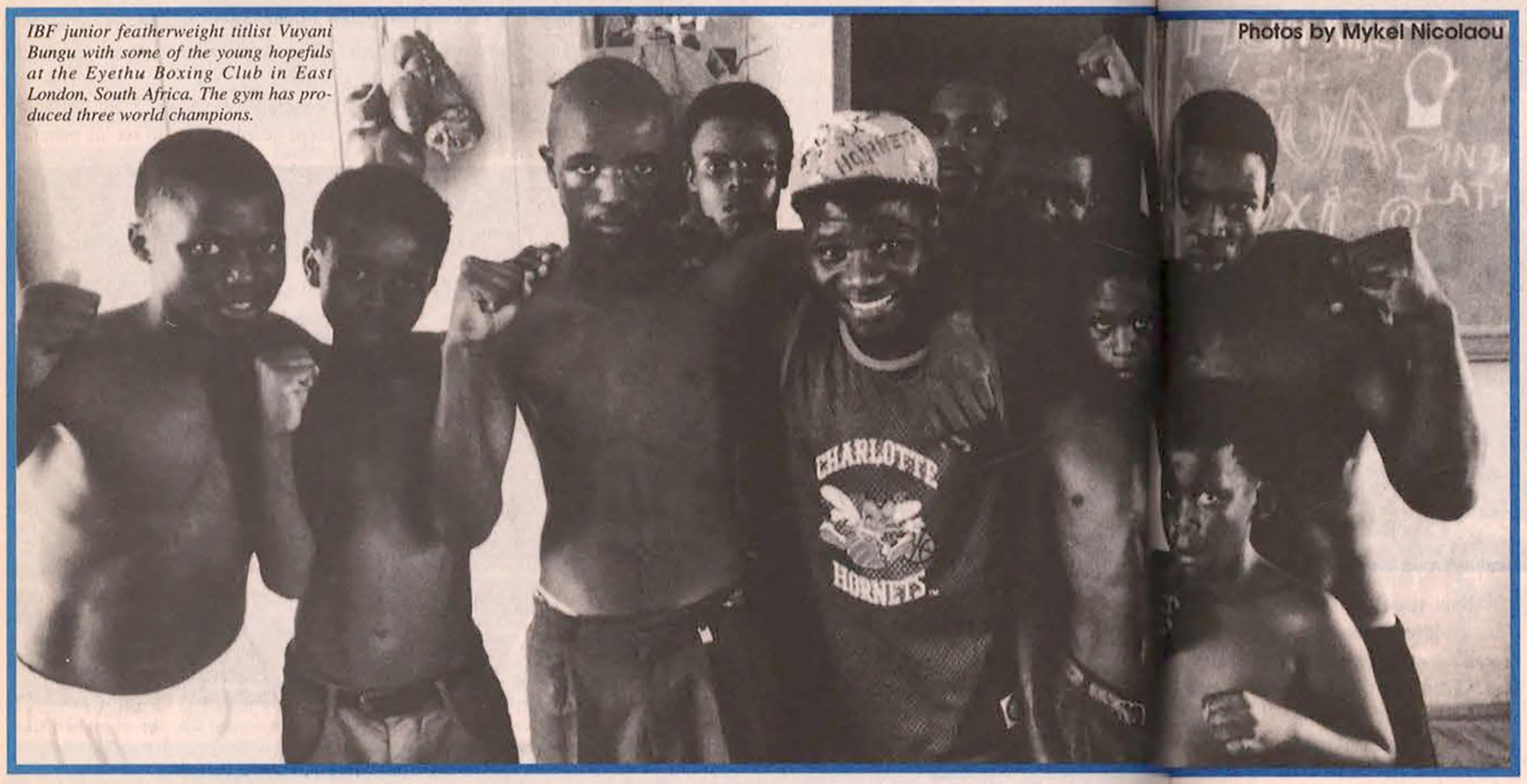


Teddy Atlas, trainer: "The buying public wants to see marquee names rather than competitive matches, even if the fighters are deteriorated. They'll pay to see older fighters. Leonard wouldn't come back unless there was a market for him. If the money wasn't available, he wouldn't come back. The public will take a chance on a guy like Leonard because of what he's done in the past. The public doesn't have the patience to see if a young fighter is going to be good.

"Leonard thought Camacho was a good selection for an opponent. The fight hurts the pay-per-view market. It wasn't like Tyson against Seldon or Bruno, where one guy submitted. This was a case where the people were conned to believe that being off after six years, Leonard could win. It will be harder to sell these types of fights in the future.

"Fights are about marketing. Tyson sold because of that dark, sinister side. Boxing is sold on events, happenings. The landscape was there for this fight. Boxing depends on these events to sell the sport. Any time you have a failing event, it hurts." ■

MR. BUNGU'S NEIGHBORHOOD



IBF junior featherweight titlist Vuyani Bungu with some of the young hopefuls at the Eyethu Boxing Club in East London, South Africa. The gym has produced three world champions.

Photos by Mykel Nicolaou

Among the Eyethu champions is unbeaten IBF bantamweight king Mbulelo Botile. Every young boy in East London's Mdantsane township dreams of becoming a professional boxer.

Bungu is a hero in Mdantsane, one of the poorest regions in South Africa. Along with fellow champions Botile and Welcome Ncita, he offers hope for all of the townspeople.

A Township Where Every Boy's A Boxer

By John Perlman

Car theft is rife in East London, South Africa, but as the last of the lean young men hops out of the minibus and shoulders his battered gym-bag, nobody bothers to shut the vehicle or lock the doors. The bold red letters on the driver's side say "Eyethu Boxing Club." Stealing the bus probably wouldn't be a very good idea.

As the last man crosses North Street, he glances upward at the surprising sound of windows slamming shut and he waves. The temperature is still topping 90 degrees, but the men quietly getting ready in the gym's stone-floor changing area have come here to sweat as much as they can.

Inside the gym itself, the sun-bleached posters plastered all over the peeling and faded walls are like a gallery of modern boxing greats—Thomas Hearns and Sugar Ray Leonard, Mike Tyson and Julio Cesar Chavez. But there are three young men among the more than 30 fighters sparring and pounding the bags whose posters are proudly placed on the walls all over the country.

There's Welcome "The Hawk" Ncita, former IBF junior featherweight champion, ripping combinations into a pair of pads held out by his trainer. There's Mbulelo Botile, holder of the IBF bantamweight crown, whipping his body through a couple of hundred situps, and then starting again on another set. And then there's a stocky fellow in a string vest and baseball cap,

A youngster works the heavybag under the watchful eye of Bungu. Boxing is a relatively new way out for the poor boys of Mdantsane. Their fathers and grandfathers practiced a form of combat called stick-fighting.

moving around and sharing quiet words with the other fighters.

Vuyani Bungu has just completed another defense of the IBF junior featherweight title, so he's not pushing things too hard today. But his presence is still felt, a quiet authority that's reflected in the way the others listen to what he's saying.

Bungu is the central figure in a boxing stable that itself represents the heartbeat of South African boxing. The Eyethu Boxing Club has produced three world champions in the past six years, and at least six fighters from the gym have held national titles. But as big as the stars of Eyethu may be, nobody is bigger than the gym itself. And that, says Ncita, is why Eyethu works.

(Continued on page 55)

The Golden Road To Stardom

DAVID REID TURNS PRO

Third in a series

By Nigel Collins

The stakes were extraordinarily high when Olympic gold medalist David Reid made his long-awaited professional debut on March 21 at the Trump Taj Mahal Casino in Atlantic City. (The main event was Montell Griffin's disqualification win over Roy Jones.) His promoter, America Presents, had already invested approximately $1.4-million in the form of a signing bonus, and was paying the 23-year-old Reid an additional $200,000 for his scheduled four-rounder against Ohio's Sam Calderon. It was also the first time any fighter had turned pro on HBO. Adding to the tension was the fact that Reid had undergone two eye operations since the Olympics to correct a drooping left eyelid. Even Calderon was cause for concern. At 10-0 (4), he was not your typical first-fight opponent. (Oscar De La Hoya, by comparison, turned pro against Lamar Williams, who was 5-2.) In order to bring its readers all the action and behind-the-scenes drama of this unique happening, THE RING attended the weigh-in the evening before the fight and spent the entire day of Reid's debut, from wake-up call to victory party, with the fighter. The result is an intriguing, in-depth look at Reid, the event, and the people surrounding both.

Thursday, March 20, 8:18 p.m.: The crowd at the Opal Ballroom of the Taj Mahal is already starting to thin out by the time David Reid steps onto the scale. Half an hour earlier, there had been an animated shouting match between supporters of Montell Griffin and members of Roy Jones' camp. With the main event fighters having taken their leave, the boxers on the undercard attract relatively little attention as they weigh in for the next night's festivities.

"One fifty-four," yells New Jersey boxing commissioner Larry Hazzard.

Reid smiles broadly, flexes his muscles, and kisses his biceps as half-a-dozen cameras click and flash simultaneously.

"They told me he was a white guy!" gasps Reid's trainer and adviser, Al Mitchell, as Calderon, a light brown Hispanic, weighs in at 157.

"I can't believe I'm finally gonna fight again," Reid exclaims, sounding like a kid on his way to a birthday party. As he leaves the weigh-in, his exhilaration bubbles over and he unleashes a spontaneous combination.

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Friday, March 21, 8:30 a.m.: Mitchell, head coach of the 1996 U.S. Olympic boxing team and Reid's mentor since the boxer first came to the gym at age 10, is already wide awake when THE RING knocks on his hotel room door at Bally's Park Place Casino Resort.

"I've been up since four o'clock, thinking about the fight," says the trainer, a trim, middle-aged man with a receding hairline and a bushy mustache. "I've always said that your fighter is a mirror of you, and I want everything to be perfect."

During the Atlanta Games, Mitchell slept only about three hours a night, and when it was over, he was bordering on nervous exhaustion. Nothing, Mitchell insists, can compare to the stress involved in the Olympics. This, he assures, is easy by comparison.

"Let's wake up David," says Mitchell, reaching for the phone.

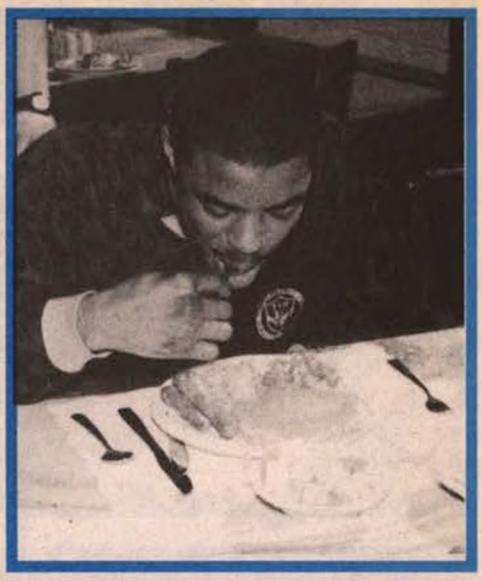
"I slept good last night," says Reid when we arrive at his room. "I'm good to go."

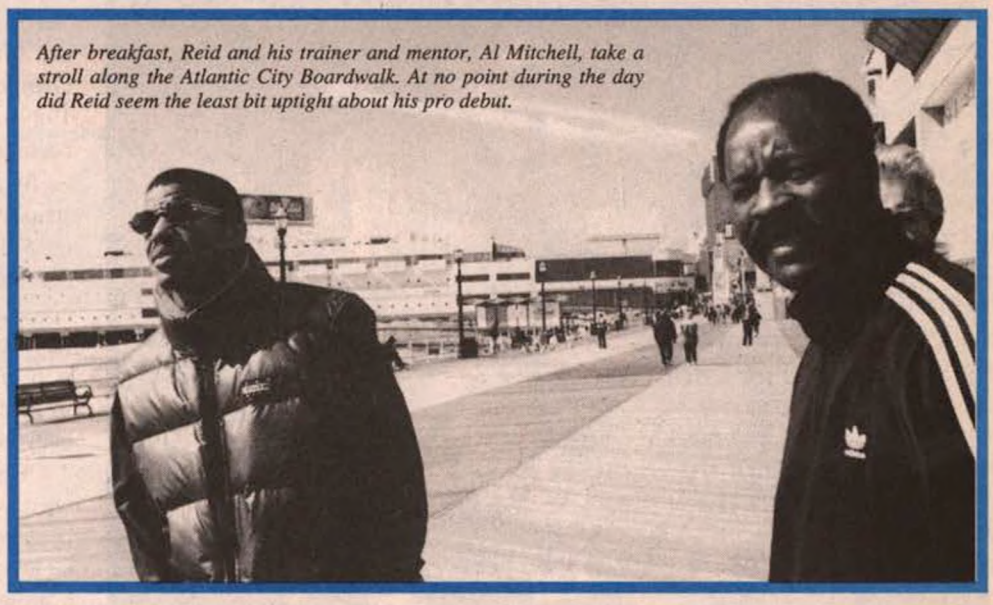
Every time THE RING has visited with him, Reid has been in the same cheerful frame of mind. On this day, he's displaying none of the prefight moodiness common among fighters. Reid has obviously been doing some reading; there's a couple of boxing magazines scattered on the bed and

Having scaled 154 pounds the evening before the fight, a clearly excited Reid kisses his biceps.

The unpretentious Reid isn't too big a star—at least not yet—to iron his own jeans. Such tasks help kill the time before a fighter is called to the arena.

Reid's first full meal after weighing in came at breakfast the morning of the fight. If he had eaten like this in training camp, he would never have gotten close to making the junior middleweight limit.





After breakfast, Reid and his trainer and mentor, Al Mitchell, take a stroll along the Atlantic City Boardwalk. At no point during the day did Reid seem the least bit uptight about his pro debut.

a paperback copy of *How To Speak Like A Pro* on the bureau. Despite his newfound wealth and budding fame, Reid is totally unpretentious, and before changing, he pulls an iron out of the closet and presses his black jeans. Then it's off to the breakfast buffet.

"There's nothin' that feels as good as after you make weight. Then you can eat anything you want," says Reid, laughing and digging into a heaping plate of French toast, pancakes, and corned beef hash. Although his eyelid still droops slightly, he's been cleared to fight by his doctors at Johns Hopkins University Hospital. Nevertheless, one can't help but wonder if the injury, incurred during the Pan-Am Games, will come back to haunt him sometime during the course of his pro career.

***

Sea gulls soar and squawk in the sky as Reid and Mitchell walk off breakfast along the Boardwalk. It's a bright, clear day, and 50 yards to the east, the Atlantic Ocean sparkles in the morning sunlight.

"There's your opponent, getting in a little last-minute roadwork," someone jokes, as an elderly man in a jogging suit approaches from the opposite direction.

"I wish he was," says Reid, only half-joking. "I'd ... "

Instead of finishing his thought, he slams his right fist into the palm of his left hand and laughs at the absurdity of the notion.

As is often the case when Mitchell and Reid talk shop, conversation soon turns to the outstanding Philly fighters of the past. Although Mitchell currently lives in Marquette, Michigan, where he runs one of the country's most successful amateur programs, he, like Reid, is a native Philadelphian, and has great admiration for the city's fighting heritage.

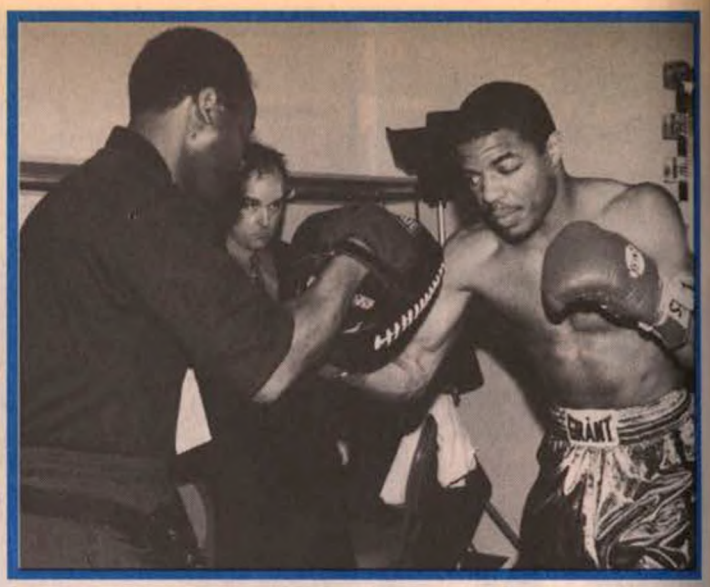
"People are going to talk about David like they talk about Bennie Briscoe and Gypsy Joe Harris," Mitchell had told a newspaper reporter earlier in the week. "I really believe that. He's going to make Philadelphia proud."

***

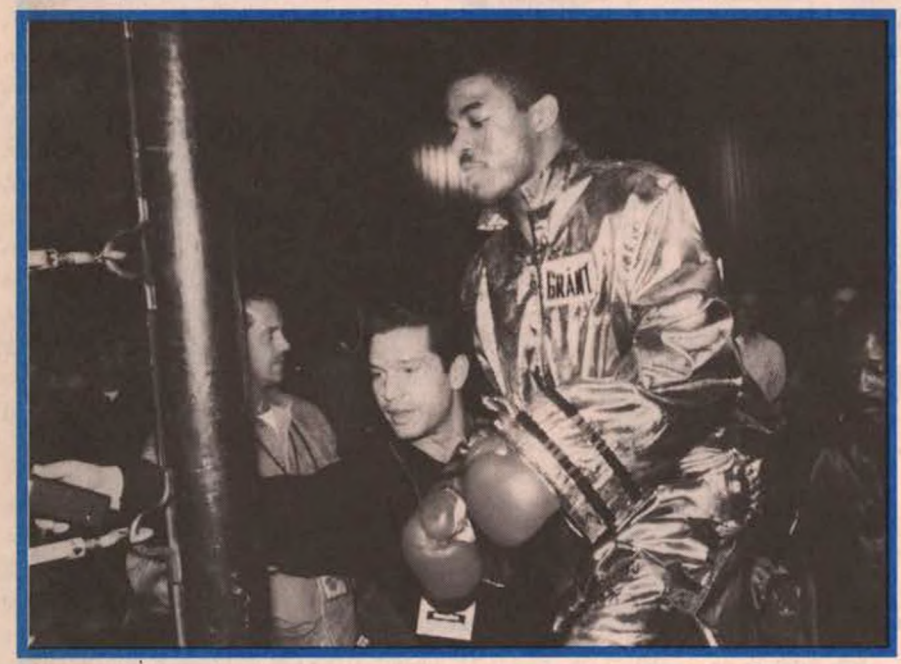
"Stay off your feet. Get as much rest as you can," instructs Mitchell as they pause outside Reid's door after returning from the Boardwalk. It's less than 11 hours till fight time.

Back in Mitchell's room, the trainer emphasizes that despite his high regard for Philadelphia's boxing legends, his plans

Every fighter undergoes an 11th-hour prefight physical, which is administered by an athletic commission physician in Reid's dressing room.



With promoter Mat Tinley looking on, Reid, gloved and raring to go, begins serious warmups. "You're doing it perfect," says Mitchell. "You're punching good."



With his gold medal-winning performance and two eye operations behind him, it's finally time for Reid to climb the ring steps as a pro. His appearance was greeted with enthusiasm by fans.

for Reid do not include the usual pitfalls—gym wars, a punishing style, the lure of the streets—that have been the downfall of so many gifted boxers from the City of Brotherly Love.

"I don't want David to be a typical Philly fighter," says Mitchell. "Instead of teaching him the left hook first, I taught him the jab and straight right hand. I want him to be different from other fighters. I want him to take it to a new level. I told David, 'Give me five years, and you'll be set for life.'

"I haven't seen any tapes of Calderon, but I figure if David handled the best amateurs in the world, he can handle this guy. I've told him not to worry about scoring a knockout. I want him to box behind his jab, just get the first win in the bank."

***

4:01 p.m., back in Mitchell's hotel room: The Olympic coach is propped up in bed, regaling a roomful of people with tales from the Games. Mitchell's brother Arnold, an aspiring politician, is on hand, as is cutman Smiley Hayward, cornerman Fred Jenkins (who runs the boxing program at the 26th & Masters Athletic Recreational Center, where Reid got his start), and Marvin "Machine Gun" Garris, the former Pennsylvania lightweight champion who retired from the ring in 1989 to work in his family's mortuary business.

By 5:12, the group has traipsed downstairs to the restaurant for the final prefight meal. The whole crew gathers at one table, and there's a definite family feel to the occasion. Everybody has known everybody for years, and self-deprecating humor is the order of the hour.

"Remember Boogie Knight?" somebody asks.

"Oh, yeah," replies Reid, wincing at what is apparently a painful memory. "I used to peek in the gym window to see if he was there before going inside. He used to beat my ass every day, but Al used to make me box him anyway."

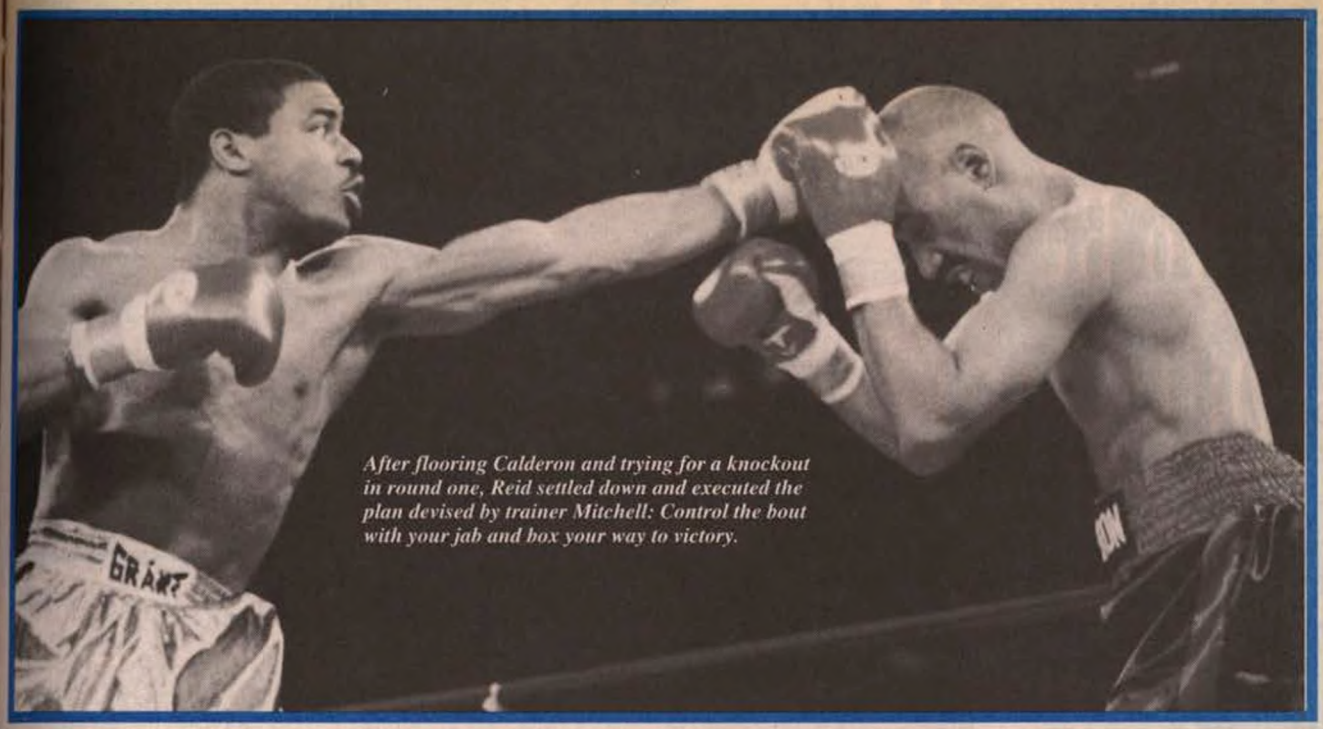
So whatever happened to Boogie Knight, the guy who used to get the better of the then-teenaged Reid?

"He went to jail," says Garris matter-of-factly between mouthfuls.

After signing autographs for several fellow diners, Reid, accompanied by his team, takes a lap around the casino floor before heading back to his room.

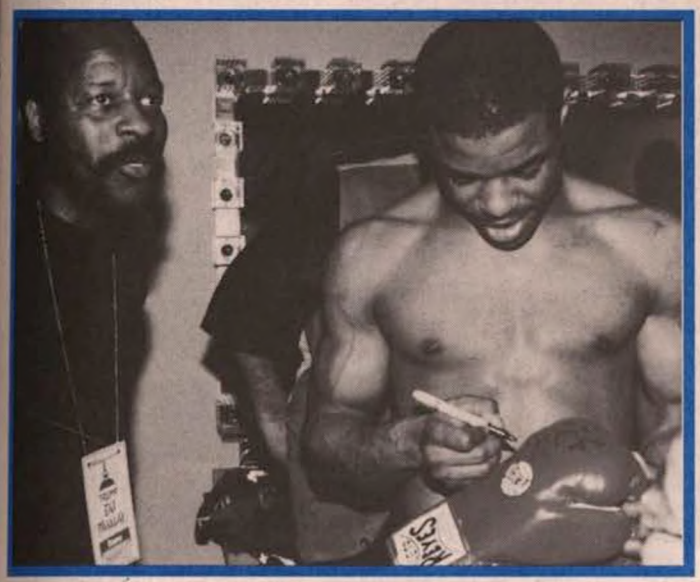
"Double-check all your stuff," Mitchell tells Reid as the fighter yawns and prepares to take a nap. "Check it again, and then check it again."

While Reid rests, everybody else retires to Mitchell's room. Time passes quickly, as one outlandish boxing story flows into



After flooring Calderon and trying for a knockout in round one, Reid settled down and executed the plan devised by trainer Mitchell: Control the bout with your jab and box your way to victory.

Having defeated Calderon by unanimous four-round decision, Reid obliges an autograph request in his dressing room as Mitchell looks on.



For Reid, fielding a victory kiss from his mother, Marie, was the only thing better than getting paid. More wins—and kisses—are sure to come.

another. At 7:05, the phone rings. It's Reid.

"He wants to know where his mouthpiece is," says Mitchell, stifling a laugh and glancing around the room.

"Tell him to look in his shoe," replies Jenkins, who had helped Reid pack for the fight.

"Can you find your shoes?" asks Mitchell, rolling his eyeballs in mock exasperation.

Ten minutes later, Reid joins the rest of the crew in Mitchell's room. Soon conversation turns to the hostile reception he had received at the Pan-Am Games in Argentina, where the fans "booed and threw stuff."

"That was nothing compared to what Danny Santos did to you," says Mitchell, referring to the knockdown Reid suffered before getting back up to win the decision. "I told you to watch out for his straight left, but you didn't listen."

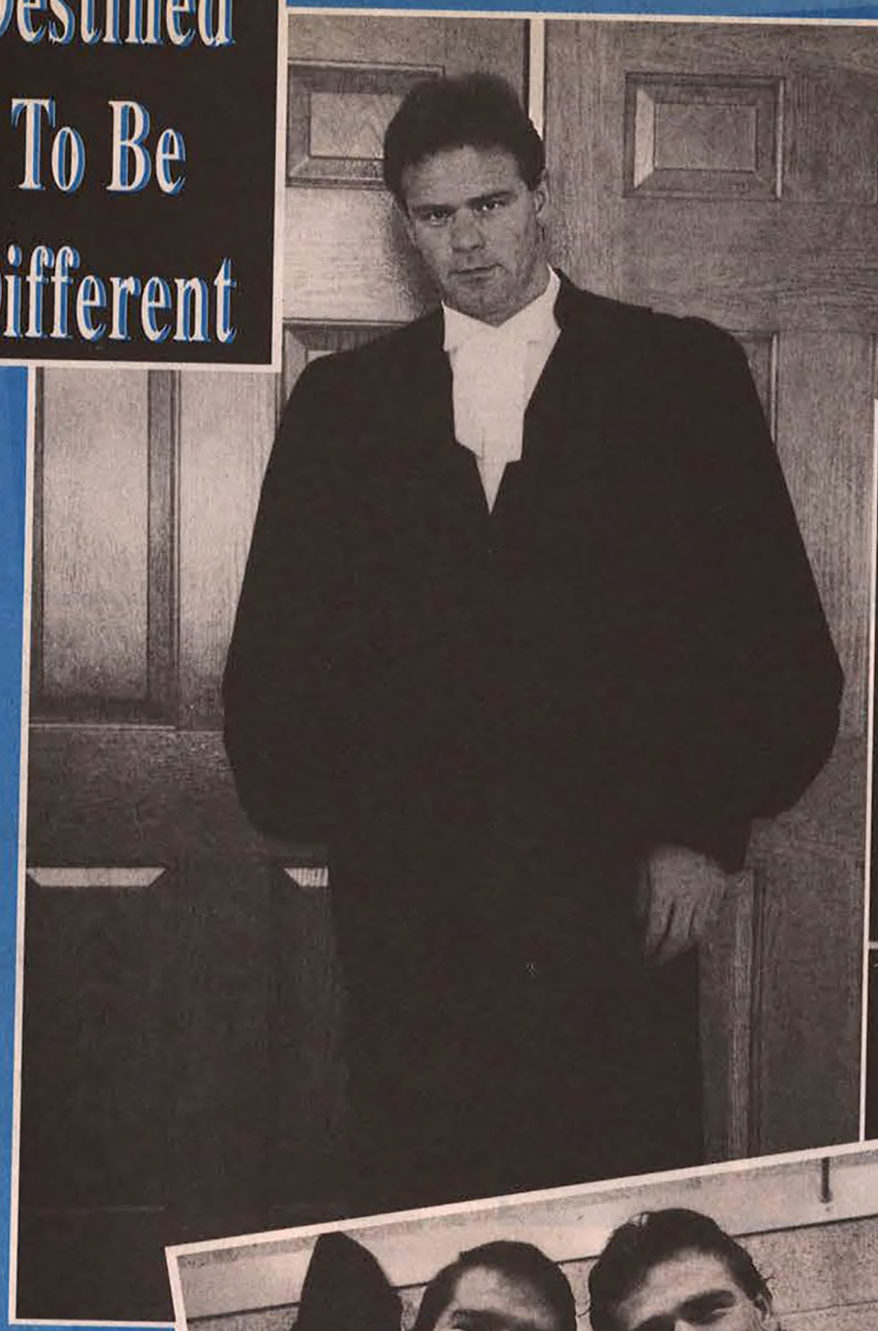
Mitchell jumps off the bed and onto the floor, where he crawls around on his hands and knees, mimicking his fighter's embarrassing moment. Laughter reverberates throughout the room, and nobody laughs louder than the butt of the joke.

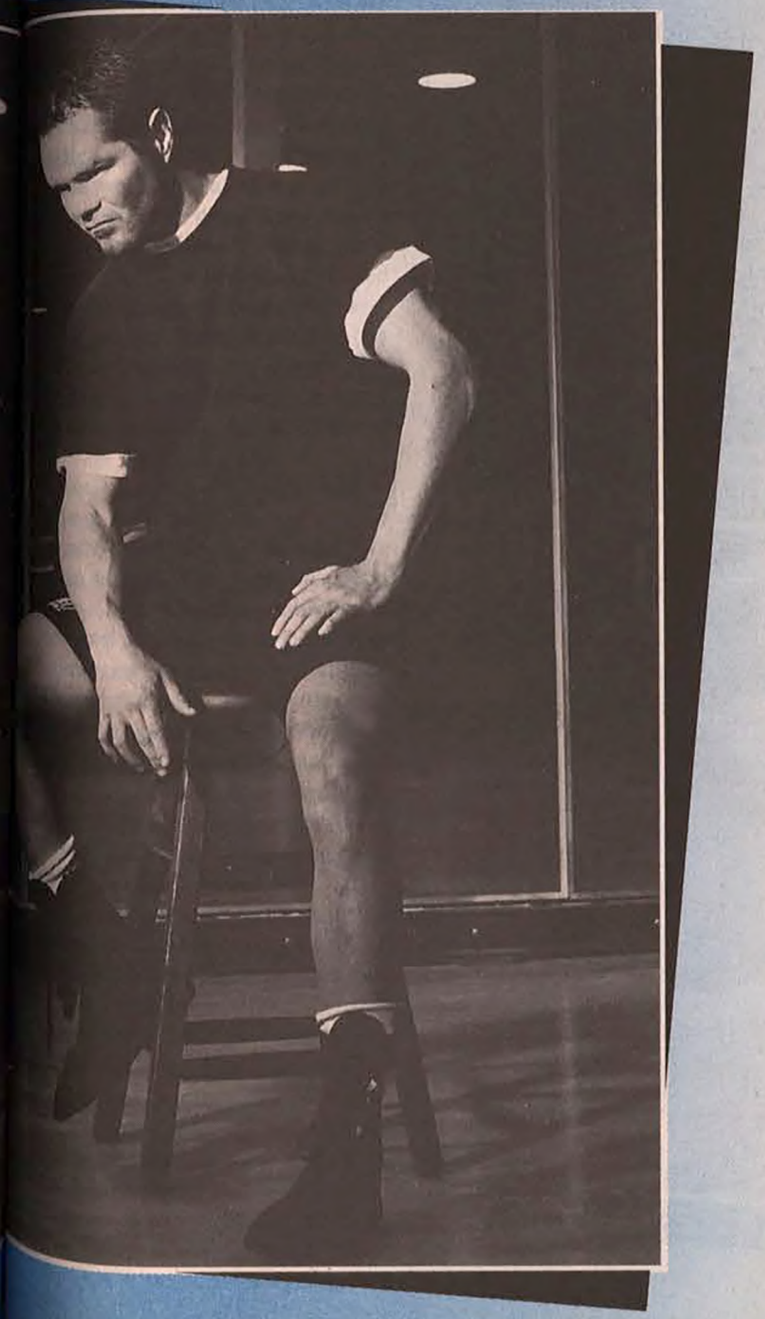
***

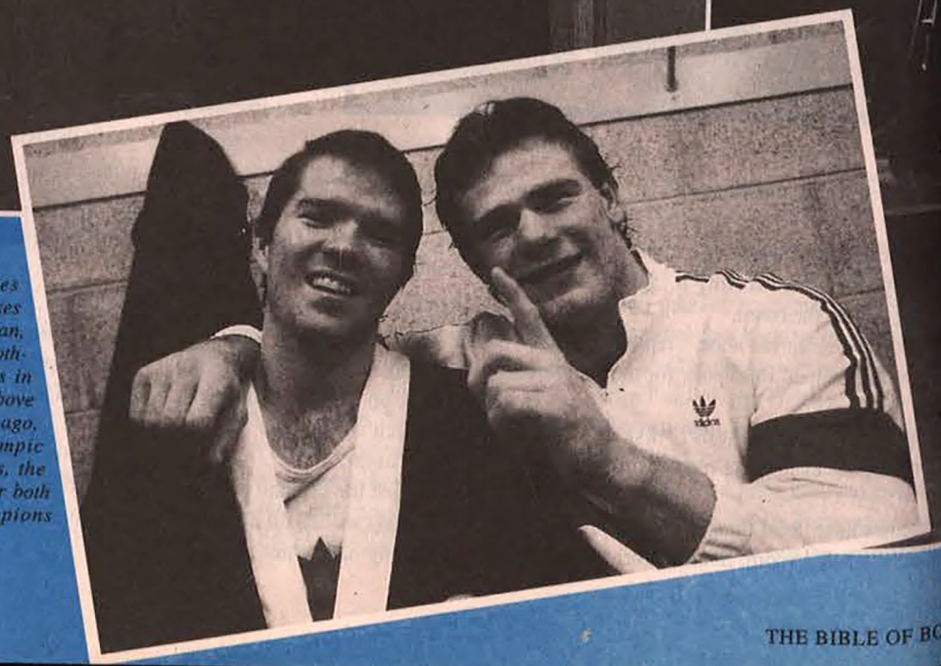
At 7:33, a van pulls up outside Bally's to take Reid to the fight. Publicist Debbie Caplan, six months pregnant, is behind the wheel. Matchmaker Tom Brown is riding shotgun. He tosses two pairs of fight gloves to Reid, who tries them on and picks the pair he wants for himself. Calderon will get the other.

(Continued on page 56)

Destined To Be Different







While deWit practices law (above), and dresses accordingly, O'Sullivan, who is engaging in another comeback, remains in his workout clothes (above right). Thirteen years ago, just before the Olympic Games in Los Angeles, the future was unlimited for both world amateur champions (right).

THE DREAMS AND SORROWS OF WILLIE deWIT & SHAWN O'SULLIVAN

By Warren Tasker

The sport of boxing is contagious. Worse, once it's in a fighter's blood, it never leaves, sticking to the bones and clinging to the heart. The few fighters who find the strength and courage to walk away when the time is right earn respect and admiration. The others, who give in to the fever, are labeled weak. Pity and scorn replace hard-earned respect in a flash.

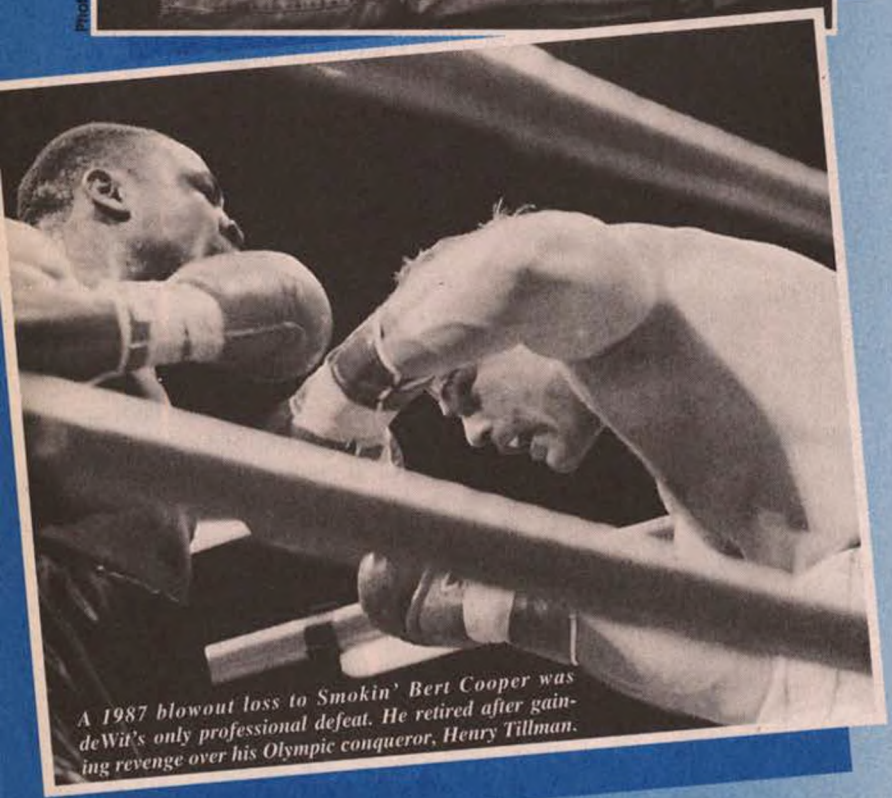
So it is that Canadian boxers Willie deWit and Shawn O'Sullivan caught fistic fever at the same time some 20 years ago. Boxing bound them together like brothers. It also drove them apart. Their story in the fight game is about picking the right spot, a tale of timing. One man's was good, the other's wasn't.

DeWit and O'Sullivan were Canada's golden boys, clean-cut, fresh-faced middle-class white kids working toward the fulfillment of their gold medal dreams at the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles. That they were boxers—not exactly traditional sports heroes in hockey-mad Canada—didn't matter. They were on a parallel course, creating the same storyline.

O'Sullivan and deWit were, in the early- to mid-'80s, poster boys, pugilistic pinups for the Canadian Olympic movement. O'Sullivan, an articulate Irish light middleweight with a twinkle in his eye and decent punching power, hailed from Toronto and represented Eastern Canada. DeWit, a slow, heavy-handed heavyweight who exuded a quiet, keen intelligence, fought out of Grande Prairie, Alberta, and represented Western Canada. The East-West rivalry in the land of the Maple Leaf is intense and decades old, and can get ugly at times. O'Sullivan and deWit solved that problem. Each faction had its own guy, and the fighters were friendly to each other and all fans across the Great Canadian divide. They brought the country together, and the media fed on the frenzy that these level-headed kids could actually grab gold in America's backyard.

DeWit, wife Susan, and their four children have found happiness just outside of Calgary. The heavyweight had plenty of chances to make a comeback, but rejected all of them.

Photo by Winter Photographics



A 1987 blowout loss to Smokin' Bert Cooper was deWit's only professional defeat. He retired after gaining revenge over his Olympic conqueror, Henry Tillman.

They weren't troubled street toughs from broken, abusive homes. They were much like the people watching them on TV and reading about them in the newspapers—just normal folks. That mainstream appeal and popularity catapulted them to international acclaim. Going into Los Angeles, the gold was theirs to lose.

Both went to the Games as world amateur champions; O'Sullivan was the light middleweight titlist (from 1981 to '84), and deWit was the heavyweight king (from 1983 to '84). Their success in the annals of Canadian amateur boxing was unprecedented. They had cleaned out their divisions. Nobody, not Russians, Cubans, Americans, stood in their way.

O'Sullivan's amateur feats were all the more startling considering he didn't box until he was 16. A year younger than deWit, he was 22 when he went to the Games. His amateur ascension was rapid but arduous. Tough character-testing bouts were the norm.

Dealing with the pressures—the frenetic Canadian media, the nothing-but-gold expectations of the fans, and their own self-imposed demands—leading up to and during the Olympics were unbelievable for both young men.

"I felt like I was carrying Canada into the ring with me," says deWit, who left the Games with a silver medal after losing in a lackluster final to gold medalist Henry Tillman. The Olympics, the apex of his amateur career, were a letdown.

"I had more fun in the amateurs at the beginning, when nobody knew who I was," deWit says. "Boxing was the easy part. Coming in second—everybody in Canada remembers that."

O'Sullivan also had to settle for silver, though under controversial circumstances. Frank Tate, his opponent in the final match, took two standing eight-counts in the second round and was still awarded the decision in a bout O'Sullivan had clearly won. He was robbed. Gold for Tate and a sister's kiss for the Canuck.

"The '84 Games were, for me, a low point," says O'Sullivan, who keeps his Olympic memory stuffed in a drawer somewhere down in the basement of his suburban Toronto home. "Beating top guys I had no right beating was a thrill for me. It meant the world. That's what I remember most."

Together they traveled the same road to the City of Angels, desiring gold and glory. Together they left not broken-hearted, but unfulfilled, disappointed, and with an eye looking straight ahead to the future. Pro boxing awaited them. No more three-rounders, no more archaic rules and politics. Real money—so they hoped—and a chance to recapture some of the magic and adulation.

They didn't know it yet, but Canada's boxing sensations were still stuck on the same parallel path entering the pros. Even the roadblocks they would encounter along the way would impact with the same tremendous force—and all at once. It's amazing in terms of progression and end results how similar the two careers would be until deWit retired in 1988.

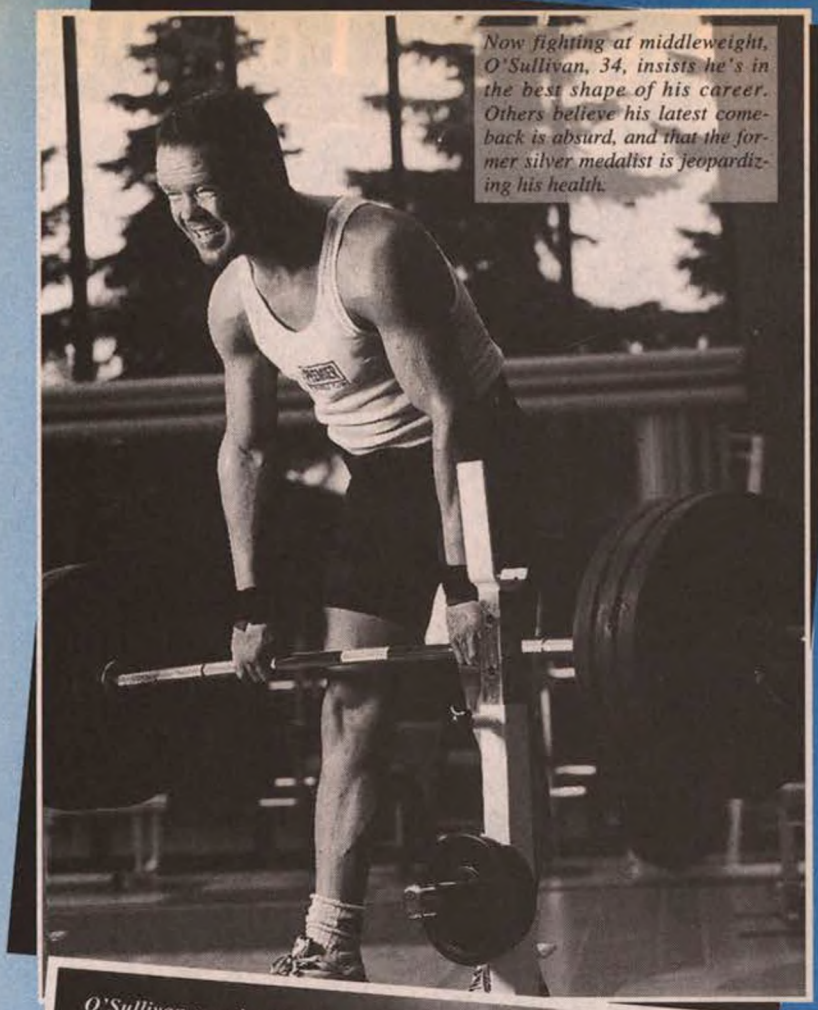
Turning pro in 1984, they both initially fought the usual collection of journeymen. Backed by the braintrust of lawyer Mike Trainer and his only client, Sugar Ray Leonard, O'Sullivan was expected to be a force at welterweight. He was surrounded by money, prestige, and, logically at least, intelligence. Dropping seven pounds to fight at welterweight, however, was a critical error, as it put O'Sullivan in a constant battle to make 147.

"It weakened me greatly," says O'Sullivan, who now campaigns at middleweight. "I didn't have the strength I had at 154, but I fought at welter because there were bigger name opponents in the division."

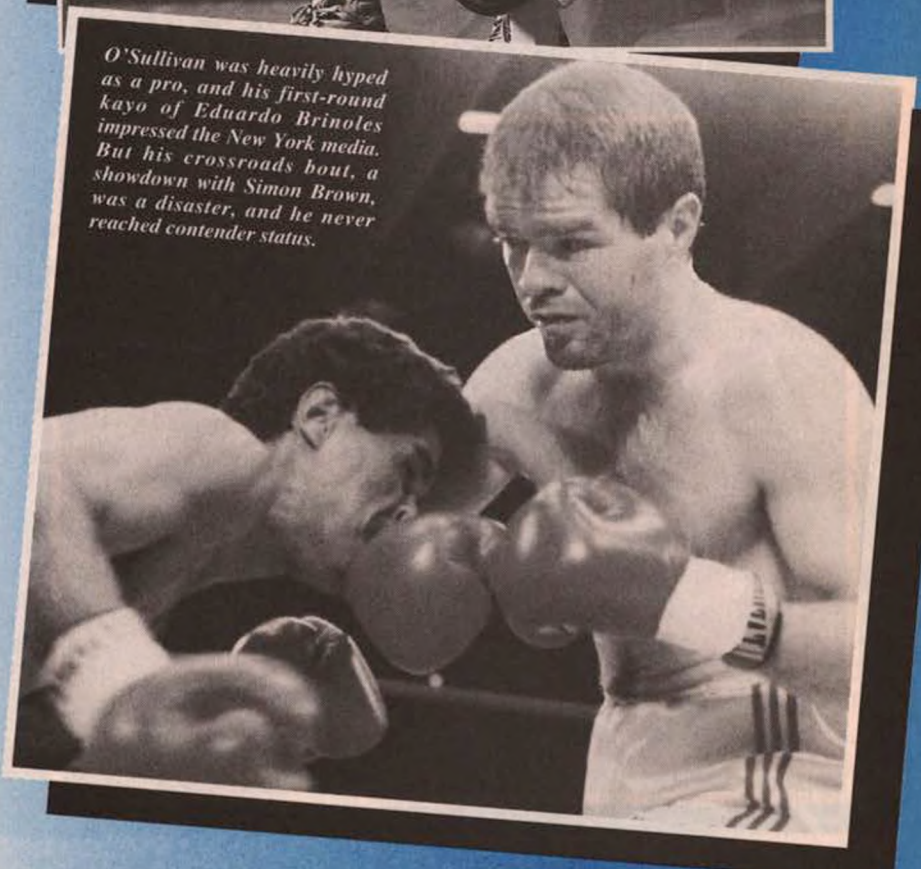
Less was envisioned for deWit. Out of nowhere came Texas real estate magnate Billy Joe Fox and oilman Ben Tamney, two millionaires with little pro boxing experience who took control of deWit's career. Southern California maker-of-champions Jackie McCoy was brought in as trainer.

The Canadian media assumed that because these Texans were millionaires, deWit's deal was worth at least $1-million, and the public was told as much. Truth is, Billy Joe and Ben, for all their Texas-sized money talk and easy-going Southern charm, weren't laying down the big backer bucks—not without some help, anyway. Along with his late father Len, who ran a highly successful gravel-crushing business in Grande Prairie, deWit had to put down some

(Continued on page 59)



Now fighting at middleweight, O'Sullivan, 34, insists he's in the best shape of his career. Others believe his latest comeback is absurd, and that the former silver medalist is jeopardizing his health.



O'Sullivan was heavily hyped as a pro, and his first-round kayo of Eduardo Brinoles impressed the New York media. But his crossroads bout, a showdown with Simon Brown, was a disaster, and he never reached contender status.

Bracing For Superstardom

FELIX TRINIDAD:

"I'M CONVINCED I'LL BEAT TERRY NORRIS"

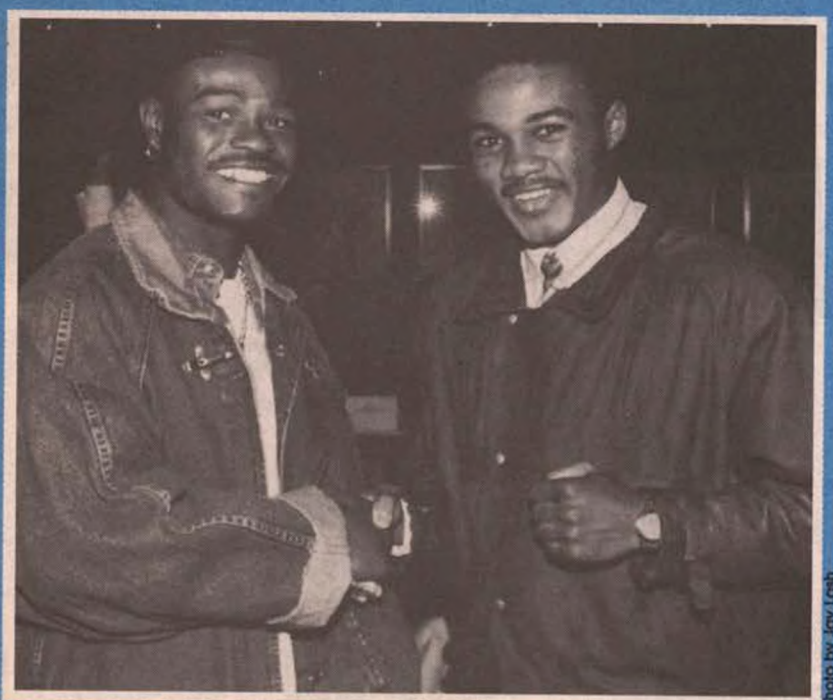


Photo by Jay Lash

Photo by Jason Ross La

Trinidad never strays far from his father and trainer, Felix Sr. So far, at least, the pair is the exception to the rule that in boxing, fathers and sons should part company.

Photo by Jay Lash

Predictably, the well-built Trinidad, who is separated from his wife, doesn't struggle to find female companionship. When asked whether women can be a distraction, he says, "It's a matter of personal control."

Trinidad flaunted his punch in a February 1995 defense against Rodney Moore. Will the Puerto Rican carry his power to junior middleweight, where he'll challenge Terry Norris?

By Steve Farhood

Pumping irony: Felix Trinidad is convinced he'll win the biggest fight of his career because Terry Norris once struggled through a near-disastrous second round. Remember, it's Trinidad who suffers from the most severe second-round jinx since Joe Frazier. He's been dropped in that stanza by Alberto Cortes, Oba Carr, Yori Boy Campas, and most recently, Kevin Lueshing.

The Puerto Rican remains undefeated because he has always managed to pick himself up, which is exactly what Norris did in June 1993, when he defended the WBC 154-pound title against Troy Waters. The challenger downed Norris in the second, and later in the round engaged the champion in a frightening, high-risk toe-to-trade exchange. Trinidad, who won the IBF welterweight title on the same card, never forgot how terrible "Terrible Terry" looked. It doesn't matter that Norris got rid of Waters in the third round. "After watching that fight," said Trinidad, "I was convinced that very day that I could beat Terry Norris."

In February, Trinidad discussed his eagerly anticipated challenge of WBC super welterweight champion and fellow pound-for-pound entrant Norris with THE RING over lunch at the Westin Rio Mar Beach Resort in Puerto Rico, about an hour from the fighter's home in Cupey Alto. Accompanying "Tito" were his lawyer and friend, Miguel Ojeda, and THE RING's longtime correspondent, Mario Rivera Martino, who served as translator.

Trinidad was late to arrive and late to

(Continued on page 61)

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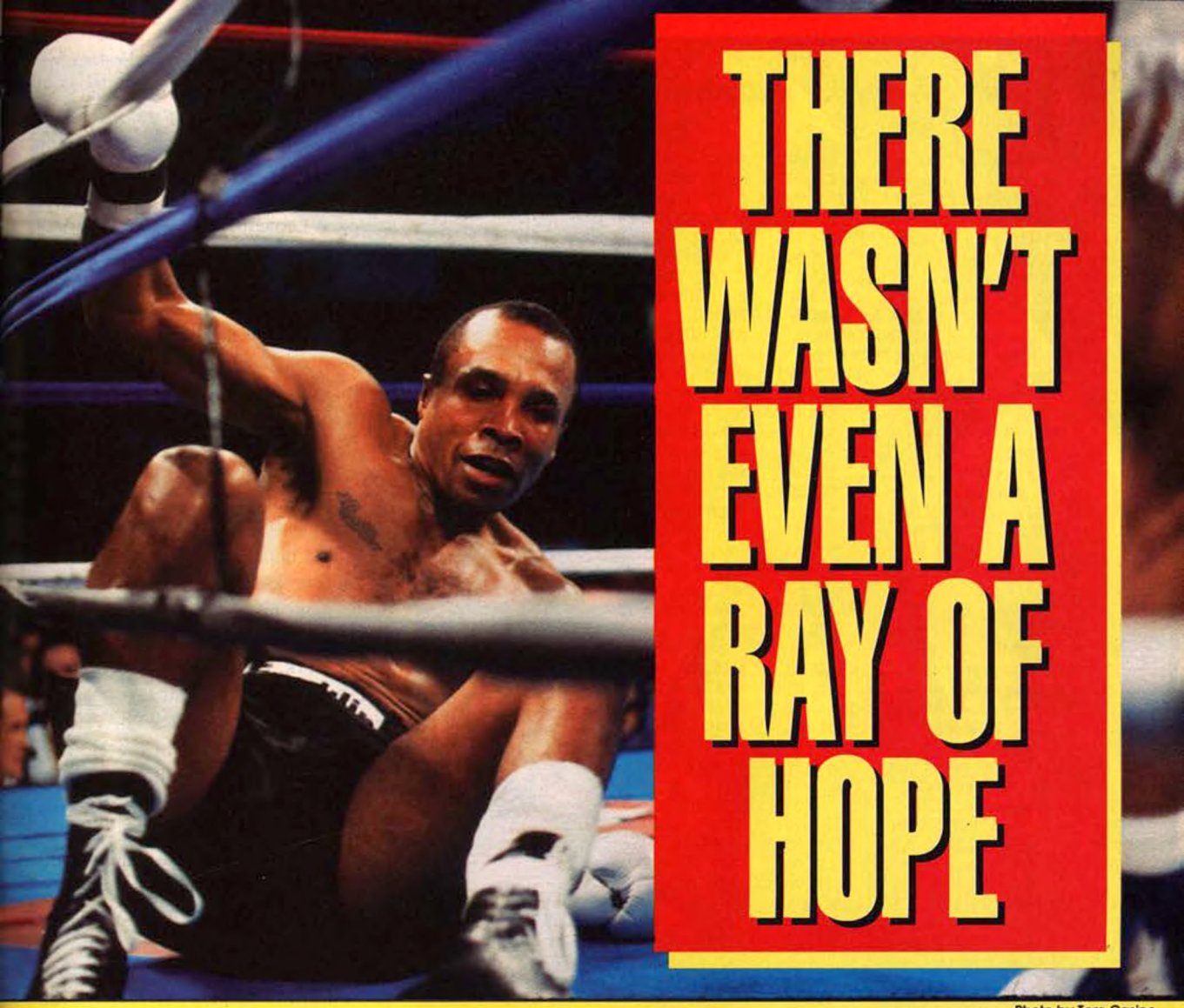


THERE WASN'T EVEN A RAY OF HOPE

Photo by Tom Casino

By John Scheinman

The gospel of boxing goes something like this: Styles make fights; kill the body and the head will die; you can run, but you can't hide; we wuz robbed.

But the one abiding principle that takes precedence over all others is the saddest, most frustrating, and most ruinous: They all come back.

More than athletes in any other sport, boxers hang on the longest. For every Willie Mays suffering the humiliation of falling down in centerfield, too old to chase down a routine fly ball, there are hundreds of boxers soldiering on with slurred speech, balky memories, and damaged motor coordination. For fighters rich or poor, champion or undercard-filler, the gym and ring have been their lives. And the steely single-mindedness that enabled them to overcome the terrible fear of pain and death to pursue this unforgiving craft also leads to their downfall. They don't know when they've had enough.

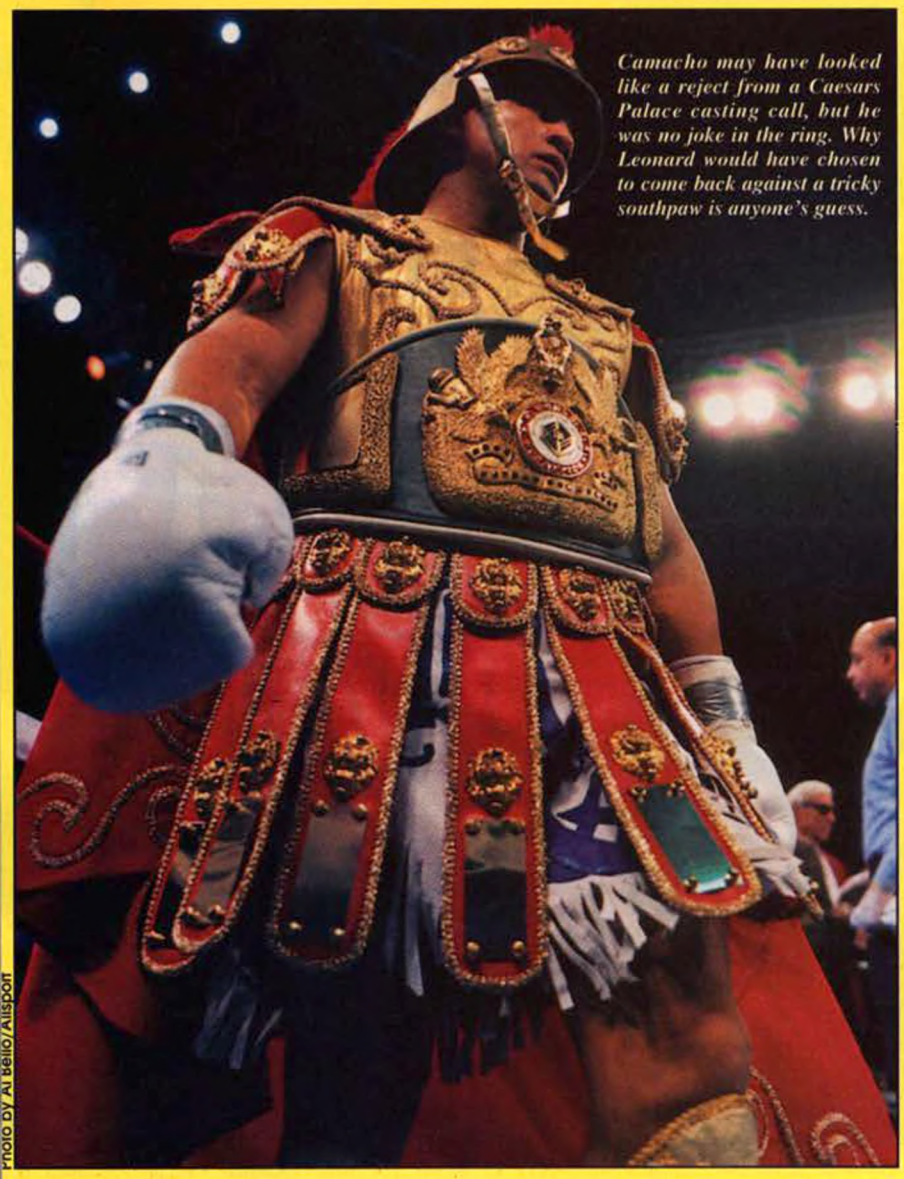
You figure Sugar Ray Leonard would know better, but he doesn't. He always seemed a cut above the rest, and maybe that's his problem. He appears delusional, like a man who has been reading his own press clippings, but not acknowledging their yellowing.

It's bad enough that Leonard came back at age 40 and got destroyed in five rounds by Hector Camacho on March 1 at the Convention Center in Atlantic City, but it's worse that he still wants more. A pulpy, hobbling Leonard promised not to box anymore at the postfight press conference, but changed his mind six days later.

"Yes, I would fight again," Leonard said on the ESPN show *Up Close*. "I want to. I'm going to. To say will I go back and try to fight a champion right away? No, I'm gonna take it easy and go through a series of tuneups to get myself back where I was two months ago."

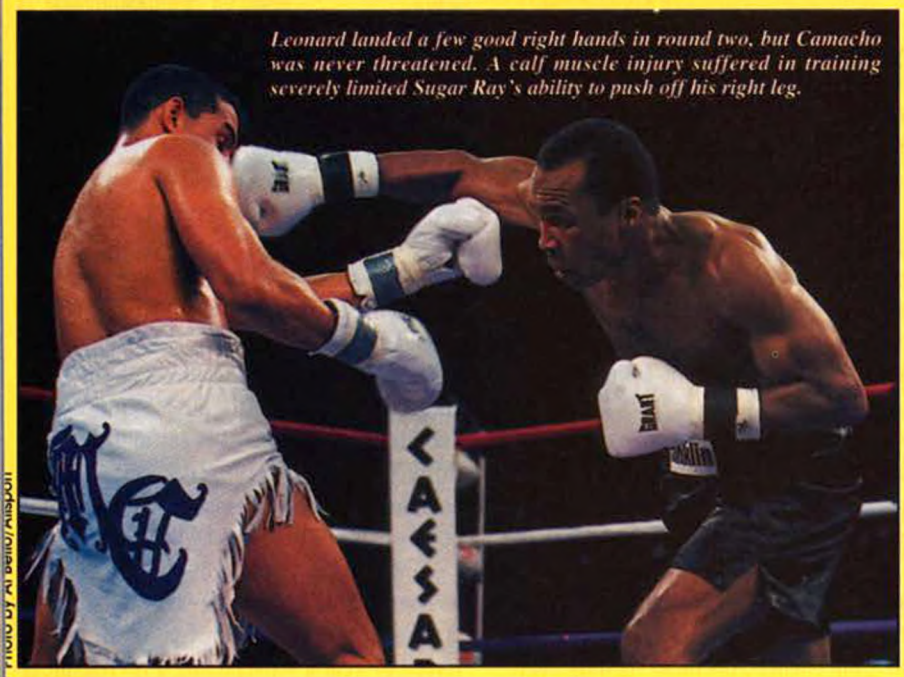
We should be so lucky. Two months ago Leonard was retired. The red flag should have gone up last year when Sugar Ray first began making noise about yet another comeback. All you could do was ask him the obvious—"What makes you think that six years after Terry Norris pounded you into retirement, you can just pop up at age 40 and do any better?"

Glib and charming as ever, Leonard, of course, had the answer: He wasn't 100 percent against Norris, he revealed. He was forced to wear a waist pad for a rib fracture



Camacho may have looked like a reject from a Caesars Palace casting call, but he was no joke in the ring. Why Leonard would have chosen to come back against a tricky southpaw is anyone's guess.

Photo by Al Bello/Allsport



Leonard landed a few good right hands in round two, but Camacho was never threatened. A calf muscle injury suffered in training severely limited Sugar Ray's ability to push off his right leg.

Photo by Al Bello/Allsport

suffered training for the fight. He took four pain-killing injections to numb his chest before climbing into the ring. His mind was on his bitter divorce from first wife Juanita. That wasn't Ray Leonard in there.

This was all news. After Norris had whipped Leonard in a less-than-half-full Madison Square Garden, Leonard took the mike from the ring announcer and told the crowd he was through. Not a peep about Juanita or the ribs then or afterward.

Now, six years later, Leonard's comeback needed plausibility. He couldn't allow himself to be lumped in with creaking or desperate comebacking retirees like Ron Lyle, Joe Bugner, or Donald Curry.

So once Leonard had selected a seemingly safe but name opponent in Camacho, he needed the excuses for his poor showing against Norris to plant a seed of possibility about his chances in the minds of fans, and maybe even himself. If that didn't work, there would always be his epic win off a three-year layoff against Marvin Hagler to fall back on. That one fight remained money in the bank for Leonard. Never mind that 10 years had passed since then.

Yet, while boxing fans may have been fooled into believing the emperor still wore some pretty fancy clothes—10,324 paid up to $400 a ticket to see Camacho-Leonard—Camacho didn't buy it. He may not be the dazzling lightweight of old, but at 34, when in shape, "The Macho Man," 64-3-1 (32), can still bring it.

A chance to chalk up a win against a legend like Leonard, 36-3-1 (25), put Camacho's often screwy head on straight. Staying busy with 20 fights since his 12-round loss to IBF welterweight champion Felix Trinidad in 1994, Camacho had been dilly-dallying against guys like Richie Hess, Craig Houck, and Arturo Nina. Most observers thought he lost last June to that other ancient, Roberto Duran. Not good.

So Leonard offered a chance at redemption, and under the guidance of trainer Jesse Reid, Camacho really got ready. He said he lifted weights for the first time in his career and practiced martial arts. Leonard, his sparring for the fight off-limits to the media (a foreshadowing of things to come), was a 7-5 favorite. Reid, however, saw what was in store.

"I think he picked the wrong guy to start out with," the trainer said of Leonard.

Working behind his jab, Camacho moved toward Leonard throughout, backing up the Sugarman. It was "The Macho Man's" most aggressive performance in years.

Photo by Tom Casino

Photo by Al Bello/Allsport

A fighter who never runs out of chances, Camacho secured himself at least one more big payday by stopping Leonard. What's next for The Macho Man? Would you believe a rematch with Vinny Pazienza? Or how about a showdown with Oscar De La Hoya?

THE GOOD NEWS

The Hector Camacho-Sugar Ray Leonard fight was a disaster, with one of the Sweet Science's most celebrated and beloved superstars not only losing, but embarrassing himself as well. However, if you believe something good comes out of anything that's bad, the fight might have served a purpose. Here's how:

•Leonard's failure will discourage other fortysomethings from returning to the ring: If just *one* former champ watched Leonard's stumbling, bumbling performance and said, "Wow, that could've been *me* in there," we've all been spared. For those planning to join the Comeback Tour, Sugar Ray's disaster was sobering. Remember, all you old-timers, breathlessly running wind sprints, pumping tons of iron, and turning your abs into a wall of muscle will never compensate for a lack of timing and balance and the inability to take a punch. Father Time kayos all.

•After shelling out big bucks and getting burned, fans will think twice before backing future comebacks: The Leonard-Camacho fight had nearly 300,000 PPV buys. Leonard pocketed about $4-million. Nice bread, even by Sugar Ray's standards. He'll make a whole lot less for his next start simply because he can no longer command the big bucks. It's a matter of supply and demand: The supply of comebacking former champions is always going to be plentiful. But if the demand to see them perform is minimal, they'll have to fight on ESPN and USA, saving us the $29.95 PPV fee. In other words, it's time for all of us to wisen up. We're not calling for a boycott, but if the average fan were a bit more discerning, everyone would benefit.

•With Leonard having ripped off the public by concealing a torn calf muscle, promoters, TV networks, and especially athletic commissions will be more conscious of potential consumer fraud: First we suffered through Oliver McCall, who wasn't emotionally prepared to face Lennox Lewis. Then came Leonard, who wasn't physically fit to face Camacho. What's next, Terry Norris facing Felix Trinidad three days after filling a prescription for Prozac and undergoing an appendectomy? Hopefully, the powers-that-be realize any such additional incidents will compromise the integrity of the game, such as it is. The bull has to stop sometime, so why not now?

•Having announced his decision to keep fighting, Leonard will ultimately embarrass himself again: That's not something to root for, just a warning.

–Steve Farhood

"I think he is going to tire out and find out the reality of who he really is. And that reality is 40 years old."

The hall had that big-fight buzz to it when the two boxers made their way to the ring. Leonard climbed in first, still handsome, trim, serious, focused. Camacho, ever the showman, danced in costume as a Caesars Palace centurion. The crowd greeted him with only half-hearted boos. (No fan really hates Camacho.) When his ridiculous garb came off, he, too, cut a fine profile.

At the opening bell, Camacho, 158¾, Orlando, Florida, immediately displayed his intent: This wasn't going to be done with a nod and a wink, a boxing match fought at the speed of an old-timers' baseball game. Camacho, a lefty, stalked and probed behind his right jab, dictating pace and direction to Leonard, 159, Los Angeles, California.

A shaky and tentative Leonard stumbled halfway across the ring into a neutral corner. He missed with a looping overhand right, and Camacho snapped off a counter. That's how Camacho had planned to work: Apply pressure and land counter shots.

(Continued on page 52)

THE RING'S 75th ANNIVERSARY

Photos by Bill Apter, Frank Vitucci, & Ray Bailey

The boys are back in town: (From left) Joey Maxim, Emile Griffith, Sandy Saddler, Carlos Ortiz, Kid Gavilan, Ken Norton, and Joe Frazier

The Greatest Gathering Of Champions In History

By Steve Farhood

If you turned to your left, Angelo Dundee was swapping war stories with his first world champion, Carmen Basilio. If you turned to your right, Beau Jack and Kid Gavilan, having arrived from Miami, were signing autographs. If you looked straight ahead, you saw Carlos Palomino and Ruben Olivares laughing and joking in Spanish. Behind him was Eder Jofre, all the way from Brazil, and at the other end of the room, Joe Frazier was holding court, with Michael and Leon Spinks and Larry Holmes only a long jab away.

If you were a fight fan, this was Boxing Heaven on the Boardwalk.

For the magazine's staff, the 75th Anniversary Celebration of THE RING, held at Bally's Park Place Casino Resort in Atlantic City on March 7, 8, and 9, was very much like throwing your own wedding. As busy as we all were, the week-

ELEBRATION

THE RING 75th ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND
BALLY'S park place
RING THE BIBLE OF BOXING
HITMAN
SHOWTIME The National Pastime
JOSPORTS, INC

The victim: Gene Fullmer accepts the award for Best Knockout

Boxing love: Helen and Angelo Dundee

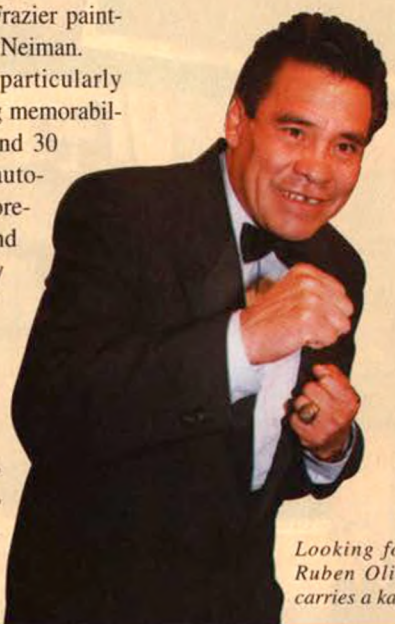
Light heavyweight royalty: Former champs Harold Johnson, Joey Maxim (standing), and Archie Moore

end whizzed by. But according to all reports, the guests and participants, including the largest gathering of former world champions in history, had a great time. Now that we can stop and think about it, so did we.

Carried from concept to reality by David Gerhardt, THE RING'S vice president of marketing, the celebration was made possible by the sponsors, Bally's Park Place, Hitman, Showtime, USSB, and the International Boxing Hall of Fame.

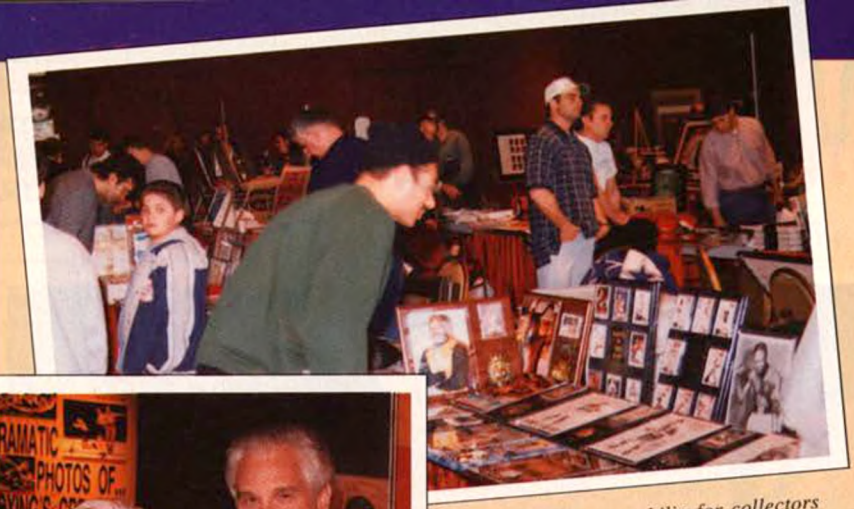
The festivities began on Friday evening, with fans and legendary champions mingling at a cocktail party. Included was the unveiling of an Ali-Frazier painting by renowned artist LeRoy Neiman.

Saturday afternoon was particularly busy, with auctions of boxing memorabilia, a memorabilia display, and 30 former champions signing autographs. In addition to the aforementioned dignitaries, on hand were Thomas Hearns, Bobby Czyz, Terry Norris, Christy Martin, Ken Norton, Ingemar Johansson, Floyd Patterson, Sandy Saddler, Jose Torres, Archie Moore, Harold Johnson, Joey Maxim, Aaron Pryor, Carlos Ortiz, Iran Barkley, Joey Giardello, Emile Griffith, Jake LaMotta, Gene Fullmer,



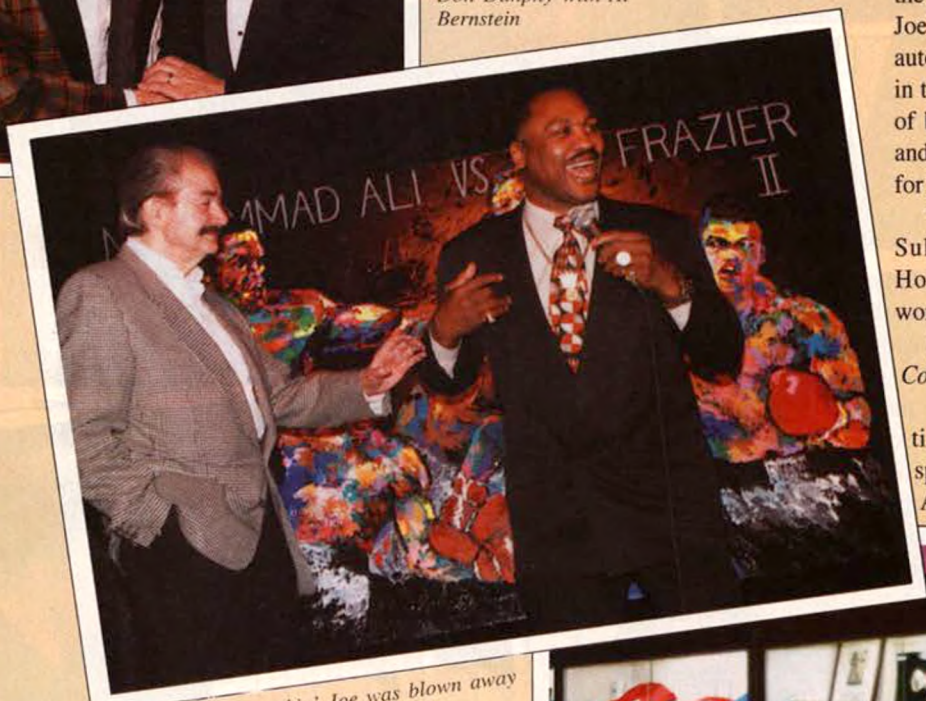
Looking for a fight: Ruben Olivares still carries a kayo punch

Tough guys: Bobby Czyz and Tex Cobb



There was memorabilia for collectors and window-shoppers alike

Golden throats: Best Announcer winner Don Dunphy with Al Bernstein



Smokin' Joe was blown away by Neiman's artwork

Joey and Rosalie Giardello were all smiles

The memorabilia auction included dozens of must-have items

Marvis Frazier, Sean O'Grady, Chuck Wepner, Mark Medal, Steve Littles, Terry Cobb, Eddie Futch, Arthur Mercante, and Don Dunphy.

Of particular interest was the live auction, which was organized by Craig Hamilton. "It was a typical auction in that we had some great bargains and also some things that ran into money no one anticipated," reported Hamilton. "But of the 340 lots, we sold 87 percent, so we were very happy."

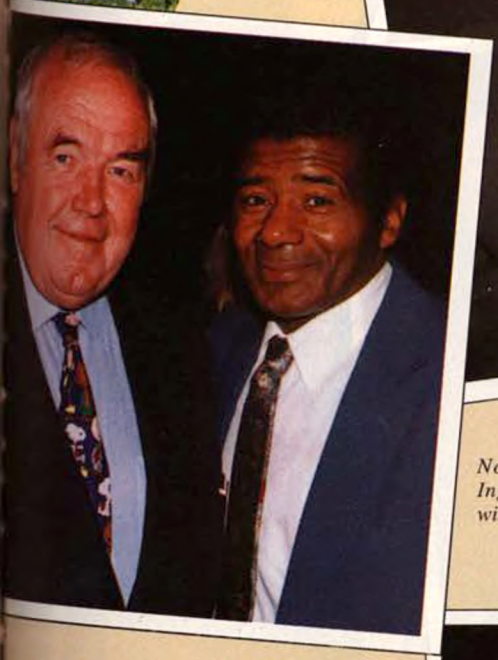
Among the more interesting items was a Stanley Ketchel championship belt, which commanded an auction-high winning bid of $25,875; a pair of Rocky Marciano's trunks brought $9,775; a program from the James J. Corbett-John L. Sullivan fight sold for $16,100; a photo of the greatest ring lineup of all-time (at the Joe Louis-Tommy Farr fight), including autographs of almost all of the champions in the ring, fetched $9,775; a complete set of boxing cards from 1951 drew $5,750; and a signed photo of Sonny Liston sold for $2,990.

"There was something from John L. Sullivan to Mike Tyson and Evander Holyfield," said Hamilton. "In other words, something for everybody."

(For more on the auction, see "Boxing Collector's Notebook" on page 65.)

The tone of the Saturday night festivities was set early with a touching speech by Charter Oak Amateur Boxing Academy Director John Callas, espous-

Carte blanche: Go right ahead and help yourself, Joe



No fourth fight: Ingemar Johansson with Floyd Patterson

Sizzling scribes: Joyce Carol Oates with Budd Schulberg

ing the importance of boxing to the nation's inner-city youth. That was followed by the highlight of the weekend, the awards banquet, during which the best of THE RING's 75 years was honored. It was a classy affair, with Dick Schaap hosting and, among others, Joyce Carol Oates and Budd Schulberg speaking. Video footage was shown throughout on a pair of oversized screens. Winners were announced in nine categories, and the proceedings were taped by the Classic Sports Network, with a planned air date sometime in late-April or early-May.

The categories, nominees, and winners:

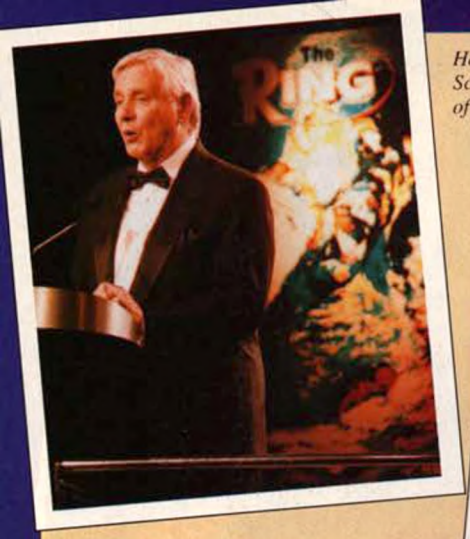
Best Fighter, Pound-For-Pound: Nominees: Sugar Ray Robinson; Joe Louis; Henry Armstrong; and Muhammad Ali. **The winner: Sugar Ray Robinson.**

Best Fight: Nominees: Jack Dempsey KO 2 Luis Firpo; Rocky Graziano KO 6 Tony Zale; and Muhammad Ali KO 14 Joe Frazier. **The winner: Ali KO 14 Frazier.**

Best Round: The nominees: Larry Holmes-Ken Norton, round 15; George Foreman-Ron Lyle, round 4; and Marvin Hagler-Thomas Hearns, round 1. **The winner: Hagler-Hearns, round 1.**

A hit, man: Thomas Hearns flaunts his literary taste

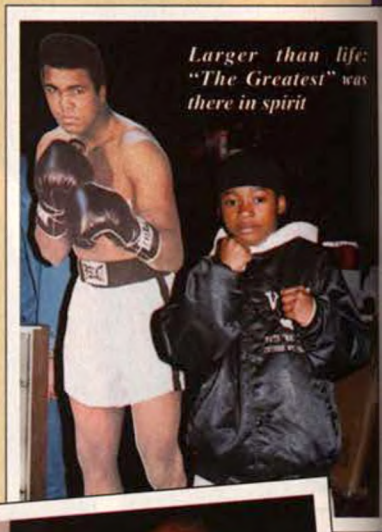
Raging: Jake LaMotta won the award for Best Chin



Host with the most: Dick Schaap was the master of ceremonies

At least take off the glasses: Collector Craig Hamilton squares off with Larry Holmes

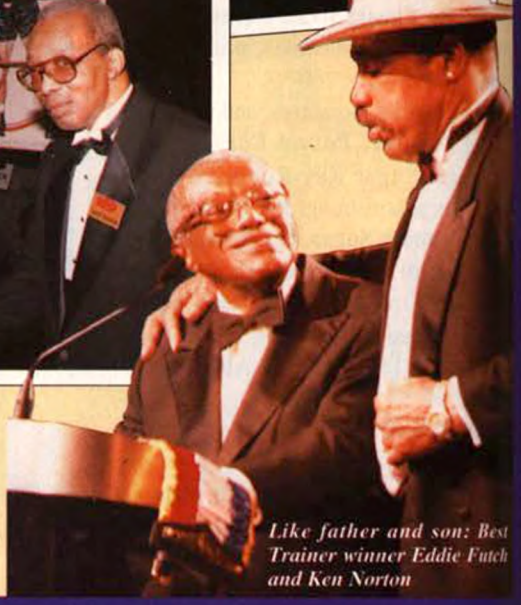
Time off from deadline: THE RING's Steve Farhood and Nigel Collins



Larger than life: "The Greatest" was there in spirit

Shine on: Multiple champs Emile Griffith and Iran Barkley

Always a champ: Joe Frazier greets Sandy Saddler



Like father and son: Best Trainer winner Eddie Futch and Ken Norton

Best Boxer: The nominees: Willie Pep; Muhammad Ali; and Benny Leonard. **The winner: Benny Leonard.**

Best Puncher: The nominees: George Foreman; Archie Moore; and Joe Louis. **The winner: Joe Louis.**

Best Knockout: The nominees: George Foreman KO 10 Michael Moorer; Rocky Marciano KO 13 Jersey Joe Walcott; and Sugar Ray Robinson KO 5 Gene Fullmer. **The winner: Robinson KO 5 Fullmer.**

Best Announcer: The nominees: Howard Cosell; Don Dunphy; and Sam Taub. **The winner: Don Dunphy.**

Best Trainer: The nominees: Angelo Dundee; Eddie Futch; and Ray Arcel. **The winner: Eddie Futch.**

Best Chin: The nominees: Jake LaMotta; Barney Ross; and Muhammad Ali. **The winner: Jake LaMotta.**

In addition, THE RING presented a pair of lifetime achievement awards to Ali and Dundee, and Hitman honored Arthur Mercante.

***

THE RING'S diamond anniversary weekend was a celebration not only of the magazine, but of boxers and boxing. We'd like to thank the sponsors and fighters who participated, and especially our readers, without whose support THE RING could never have become "The Bible Of Boxing." In fact, we'd like to thank every one of our readers individually, but that's impossible for two reasons. Firstly, there are too many of you. And secondly, we're simply too busy. After all, THE RING'S 100th anniversary is just around the corner. ■

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This hard-hitting video [illegible] look at the best [illegible] of Roberto Duran, [illegible], Mark Breland, Antonio [illegible] Michael Moorer, Marlon Starling, an[illegible]naldo Snipes. **53 minutes**

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This exciting follow[illegible] includes ring action of [illegible], George Foreman, A[illegible]berto Duran, Leslie Stewart, La[illegible]mes, and Bobby Czyz. **51 minutes**

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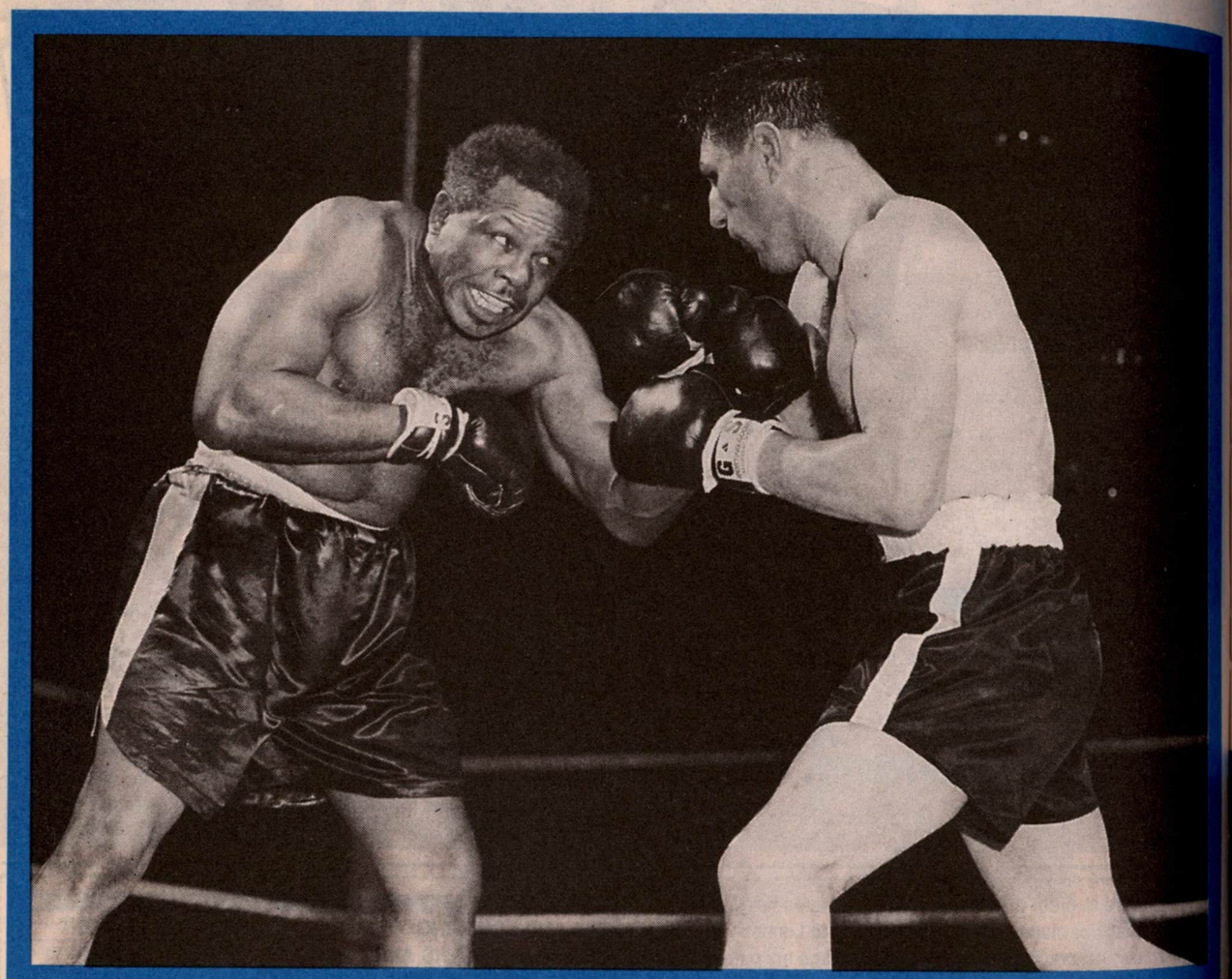
ARCHIE MOORE VS. YVON DURELLE I

The Greatest Light Heavyweight Fight Of All-Time



By Jim Prime

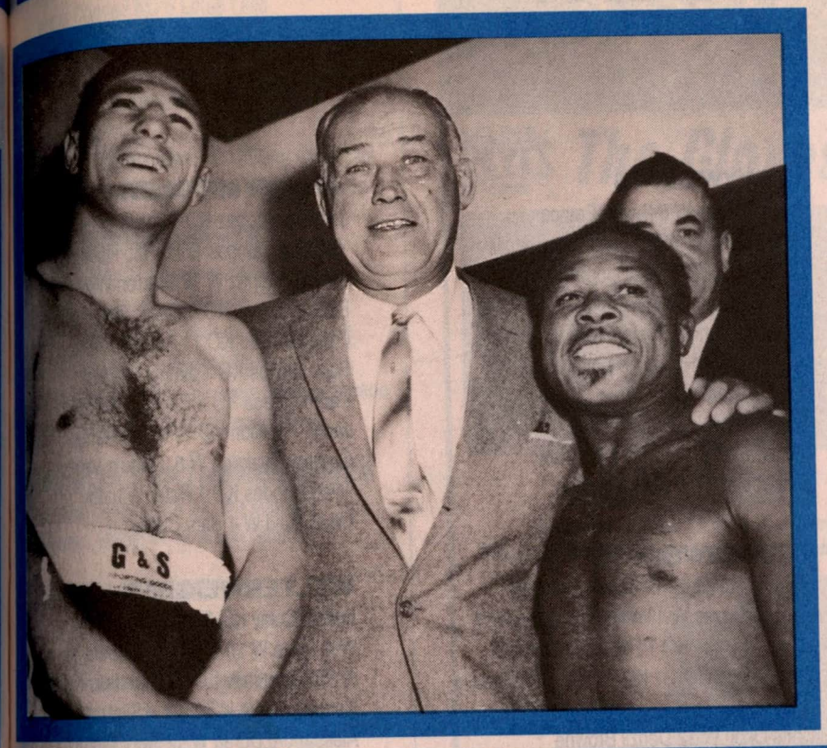
Some called it The Fight of the Decade. Others went further, declaring it The Fight of the Half-Century. Hardly unusual in a sport whose very lifeblood is hyperbole. Today, of course, these claims are made before the fight is even held. But in the case of the first Archie Moore-Yvon Durelle title bout, these grand assessments were not part of the giddy prefight hype dreamed up by frenzied promoters. Instead, they were the sober judgments of hardened ring aficionados one day after. No less an authority than Joe Louis called it, "The greatest fight I've seen."

For world champion Moore, the classic light heavyweight battle was the brightest jewel in a dazzling crown of fistic accomplishments. For Canada's Durelle, it was more of a solitaire, a moment of instant fame and bittersweet immortality.

More than 38 years after the original "Brawl In Montreal," the two men look back to their epic battle, held at the Forum in Montreal on December 10, 1958, with an almost fond, time-filtered nostalgia. The two were a study in contrasts, and they remain so.

The dapper and ageless Moore is a soft-spoken, articulate black man of great self-discipline and an almost palpable, hard-earned dignity. During his lengthy title reign, his spartan training regimen and exotic aborigine diet helped to create an almost mystical aura. It is an aura that remains even today.

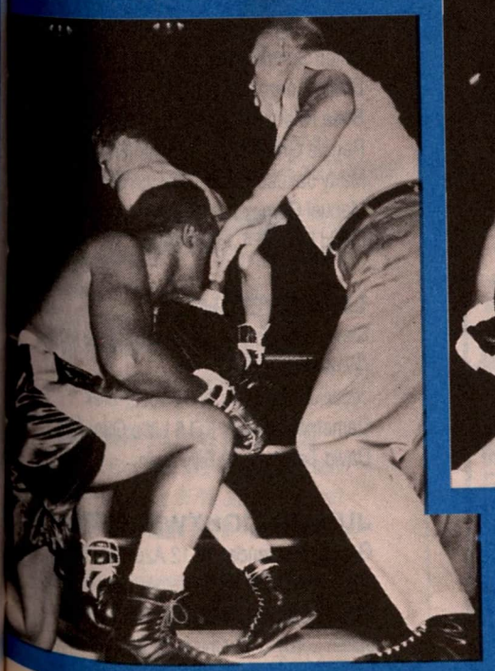
Canadian and British Empire champion Durelle was a backwoods brawler whose only training came from hauling lobster traps from the icy waters near his home village of Baie Ste. Anne, New Brunswick. A skeptical *Sports Illustrated* suggested "when Durelle throws a hook, it is more likely to catch a haddock than an experienced boxer."

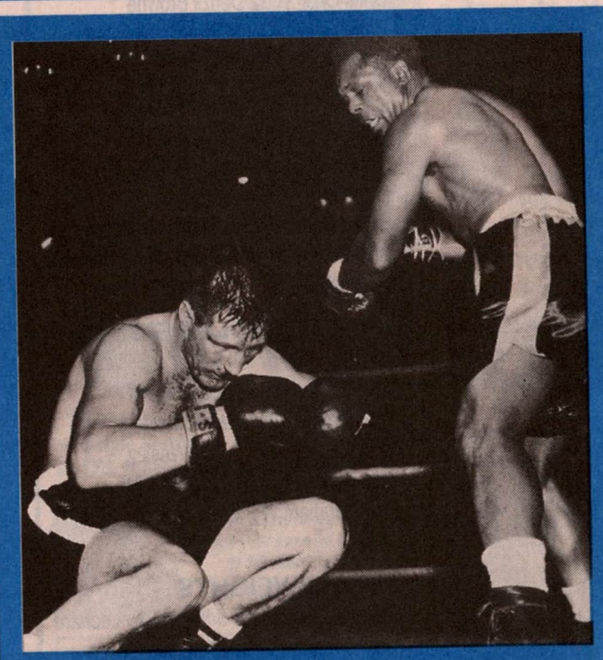


Durelle and Moore pose at the weigh-in with former heavyweight champion Jack Sharkey, who refereed their first title fight. Moore, 44, defended the world light heavyweight title vs. Canada's Durelle at the Montreal Forum.

Durelle, of Acadian-French stock, drank heavily, often while in preparation for a major fight, and ignored every known convention of boxing etiquette. When "The Fighting Fisherman," as he was dubbed by his legions of Canadian fans, recounts past battles, he evokes vivid cartoon images of fists disappearing elbow-deep into stomachs, and stunned opponents lifted vertically from the canvas by the force of superhuman punches. Popeye the Sailor Man vs. an endless parade of Blutos.

Despite their obvious social and cultural differences, Durelle and Moore have become good friends over the years. Theirs is a bond forged from a common battle for respect.





Moore crashed three times in the first round (left), then again in the fifth. Somehow he survived, and with the challenger having punched himself out in the early rounds, "The Ol' Mongoose" kept the crown with an 11th-round kayo (above).

"I love Yvon Durelle like a childhood pal, a buddy," says Moore with surprising gentleness in his voice. "And as the years go by, I can enjoy our great fights even more knowing that he's a healthy man who is in charge of his faculties and has the admiration of the people around him."

Durelle has equally high praise for his one-time adversary.

"I think the world of him," he says in a thick, gravely drone that does little to discourage the Popeye comparison. "He's a real gentleman, and we respect each other."

Moore, the suave former champion whose real age was a hotly debated topic

(Continued on page 62)

SUMMARY

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Brian Nielsen W 8 Daniel Franco
Jimmy Thunder KO 1 Crawford Grimsley
Chris Byrd W 10 Bert Cooper
Kirk Johnson KO 8 Everton Davis
Michael Grant W 10 Jeff Wooden
Joe Hipp KO 1 Lorenzo Boyd
Alex Stewart KO 1 Samson Cohen
Ray Anis KO 10 Bobby Harris
Ike Ibeabuchi W 10 Marion Wilson
Butterbean KO 2 Kenny Woods

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Robert Daniels W 12 Kenny Keene
Fabrice Tiozzo W 10 Mike Peak
Johnny Nelson KO 7 Patrick Aoussi
Juan Carlos Gomez KO 9 Jose Arimateia Da Silva
Chris Okoh W 12 Denzil Browne
Dario Matteoni W 12 Nestor Giovannini
Terry Ray KO 3 Bobby Crabtree

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Montell Griffin W Disq. 9 Roy Jones
(Wins WBC Title)
Rocky Gannon KO 5 Dominick Carter
Crawford Ashley KO 3 Roberto Dominguez

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Andrei Shkalikov KO 8 Mauro Galvano
Willie Monroe W 12 Scott Lopeck
Troy Watson KO 1 Ralph Monday
Chris Johnson KO 2 Paul Wesley
John Mugabi KO 10 Ambrose Mlilo
Herol Graham W 8 Craig Joseph

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Hector Camacho KO 5 Sugar Ray Leonard
Lonnie Bradley D 12 Otis Grant
Silvio Branco W 12 Verno Phillips
Glen Johnson W 10 Sam Garr
Tony Marshall KO 6 Edwin Curet
Verno Phillips W 8 Darryl Ruffin
Donald Curry KO 4 Gary Jones

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Jose Luis Lopez KO 6 Jorge Vaca
Yori Boy Campas KO 5 Rito Ruvalcaba
Steve Martinez W 12 Warren Williams
Rodney Jones KO 6 Oscar Gonzalez
Freeman Barr KO 11 Andres Arellano
Gary Jacobs KO 1 Jimmy Vincent
Pedro Ortega KO 6 Engels Pedroza
Jason Papillion KO 3 Roland Rangel
Godfrey Nyakana W 8 Joaquin Velazquez
Ryan Rhodes KO 1 Peter Waudby
David Reid W 4 Sam Calderon

WELTERWEIGHTS
Derrell Coley KO 11 Kip Diggs
Willy Wise W 10 Dingaan Thobela
Andrei Pestriaev KO 12 Jose Luis Navarro
Rodney Moore KO 2 Tony Silot
Alessandro Duran W 12 Gary Murray
Freddy Ladd KO 1 Lee Cargle
Roger Mayweather KO 12 Carlos Miranda
Fernando Vargas KO 1 Jorge Morales

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS
Charles Murray W 10 Livingstone Bramble
Soren Sondergaard KO 1 Richie Hess
Bolillo Gonzalez W 10 Hector Lopez
Shea Neary KO 3 Jeremiah Malinga
Reggie Green KO 6 Ken Jamerson
Marty Jakubowski KO 2 John Gottchling
Manuel Gomez KO 3 Michael Lerma
David Diaz W 4 Jessie Berry

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Steve Johnston W 12 Jean-Baptiste Mendy
(Wins WBC Title)
Jesse James Leija W 12 Joel Perez
Demetrio Ceballos KO 6 Little Guns Pumar
David Tetteh W 12 Billy Irwin

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS
Genaro Hernandez W 12 Azumah Nelson
(Wins WBC Title)
Derrick Gainer W 12 Ulrich Johnson
Julien Lorcy D 12 Chico Castillo

Djamel Lifa W 8 Freddy Cruz
Jesus Chavez KO 6 Louie Leija
Orlando Canizales KO 3 Roland Gomez
Justin Juuko KO 1 Martin Ramirez
November Ntshingila W 10 Antonio Hernandez
Takanori Hatakeyama KO 4 Dong Chun Yun
Floyd Mayweather Jr. KO 1 Kino Rodriguez

FEATHERWEIGHTS

Kevin Kelley W 12 Jesus Salud
Angel Chacon KO 4 Arnaldo Ballardo
David Santos KO 1 Shane Gannon
Willie Jorrin KO 7 George Parra
Steve Robinson KO 1 Tomas Santos Serrano
Zahir Raheem D 6 Jose Covarrubias

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

Enrique Sanchez W 12 Joe Manzano
Cassius Baloyi W 12 Anton Gilmore

BANTAMWEIGHTS

Veeraphol Sahaprom Tech. Win 6 Joven Jorda
Adan Vargas KO 9 Rudy Bradley
Keiji Yamaguchi W 10 Marlon Carillo
Lehlohonolo Ledwaba W 12 Gianmaria Petriccioli
Johnny Bredahl KO 3 Drew Docherty

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

Yokthai Sithoar W 12 Aquiles Guzman *(Retains WBA Title)*
Danny Romero KO 6 Jaji Sibali *(Retains IBF Title)*
Johnny Tapia KO 3 Jorge Barrera
Jesper Jensen W 6 Anthony Hanna
Samson Dutch Boy Gym KO 4 Cruz Carbajal

FLYWEIGHTS

Arthur Johnson W 12 Sammy Stewart
Carlos Salazar D 12 Antonio Ruiz
Raul Juarez W 12 Ignacio Aguilar
Paul Weir W 8 Anthony Hanna
Eric Morel KO 2 Esteban Ayala

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS

Michael Carbajal KO 10 Scotty Olson
Miguel Martinez W 12 Jose Laureano
Alberto Guardado KO 2 Tommy Phillips

STRAWWEIGHTS

Ratanapol Sor Voraphin KO 4 Luis Doria *(Retains IBF Title)*

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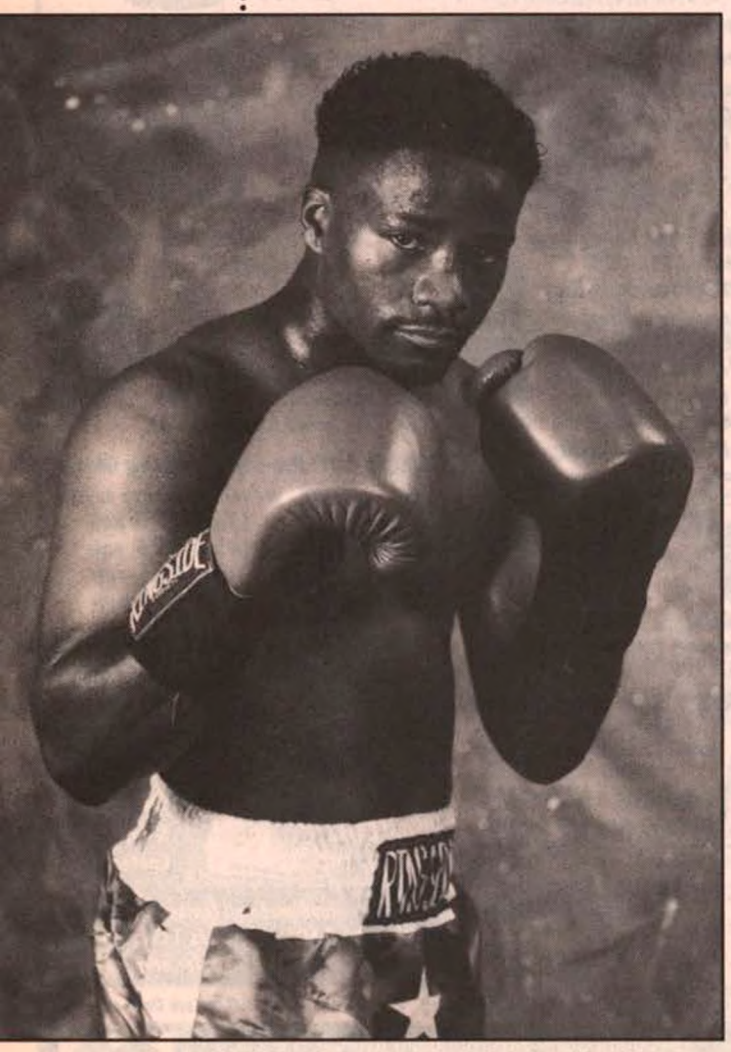
RINGSIDE REPORTS

FIGHTER *of the* MONTH

Standing 5'4½", it would have been easy for Johnston to come up short against defending WBC lightweight champion Jean-Baptiste Mendy. Bad enough the challenger needed a step-ladder to reach his lanky opponent. But Johnston was further handicapped when a fifth-round clash of heads resulted in a nasty gash over his right eye. The blood hampered his vision, and as the middle rounds came and went, a victory on Mendy's home turf seemed a pipe dream.

The proliferation of titles has redefined the word champion, but Johnston surely displayed championship heart in rallying over the last three rounds to take Mendy's belt by split verdict. We can't be sure Little Stevie is going to dominate the division, but it's difficult not to root for a fighter whose every punch is a reach.



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Steve Johnston

Arturo Gatti W 12 Tracy Patterson

Atlantic City, New Jersey: Maybe Gatti won't need a plastic surgeon to put his face back together when his career is over after all. Instead of slugging it out toe-to-toe in typical Gatti fashion, the defending IBF junior lightweight champion displayed newfound boxing smarts en route to a 12-round unanimous decision over mandatory challenger Patterson at the Convention Center.

When the 24-year-old Gatti, 130, Jersey City, New Jersey, via Montreal, Canada, won the title from Patterson, 130, Highland Park, New York, in December 1995, there were plenty of people who felt the wrong guy got the decision. Patterson, 32, had staged a spirited stretch drive in that one, and he picked up right where he left off in the first round of the rematch, jolting Gatti into the ropes with a right to the chin, then crumpling him to the canvas with a hook to the belly.

Incredibly, referee Rudy Battle (USA) ruled the bodyshot, which clearly landed in fair territory, was low. As a result, the knockdown didn't count. Patterson protested, but to no avail, and Gatti quickly recovered.

Patterson failed to press his advantage, dolling out punches in a most miserly fashion, and allowing Gatti to regain control over the next four rounds. The challenger briefly awoke from his lethargy in the sixth, connecting with enough rights to have Gatti stumbling in the direction of the wrong corner at the bell. But when the champion rebounded to have a strong seventh round, Patterson retreated into his shell and never reemerged.

Battle unnecessarily penalized Gatti, 27-1 (22), a point for punching low in the eighth, but other than that, the champion swept every round after the sixth. He connected repeatedly with his left, causing Patterson's right eye to swell partly shut. And though the loser blamed his impaired vision on a sinus condition, he had nobody but himself to blame for his meager punchrate.

Another Battle blunder widened the score in the ninth, when he ruled a slip by Patterson a knockdown. But by then it was basically a matter of how wide Gatti's margin of victory would be. Patterson, due to his reluctance to let his hands go, had pretty much taken himself out of the fight. (According to CompuBox, Patterson threw only 354 punches the entire fight, compared to 1,031 by Gatti.)

The champion worked his left hand overtime in the 11th, spearing Patterson, 57-5-1 (40), practically at will, then danced and showboated through the final round like a man who knew he was home-free. And indeed he was, winning by scores of 118-108 (Robert Exton), 117-109 (David McCullough), and 116-110 (George Hill). All three judges are from the USA.

"This is the cleanest Arturo's face has looked coming out of a fight in a long time," said relieved co-promoter Dino Duva.

"I'll fight again one more time at 130," said Gatti. "If we can't get the fight we want [Azumah Nelson], I'll have to move up to 135."

Promoters: Main Events, Peltz Boxing

(2-22-97)

Nigel Collins

Photo by Marty Rosengarten

Patterson landed with his head, but not often with his fists

Steve Johnston W 12 Jean-Baptiste Mendy

Paris, France: Boxing effectively and taking advantage of a lackluster effort by the defending champion, Johnston took a split decision from fellow southpaw Mendy to win the WBC lightweight title at Halle Carpentier. It was Mendy's first defense.

The veteran Mendy, 133½, Paris, via Senegal, was sluggish throughout, failing to sufficiently raise the pace when clearly being outboxed from long range. The jab of mandatory challenger Johnston, 134½, Denver, Colorado, was the key, snapping out frequently enough to nullify Mendy's advantages in height and reach. Mendy, 33, was further hampered when penalized a point in the fifth for a clash of heads that cut the 24-year-old Johnston's right eye and opened a deep gash on his own forehead. By the final bell, Mendy realized he had not done enough, the only surprise being that one of the judges thought otherwise.

Johnston, 21-0 (13), opened smartly, firing home jabs to both body and head to which Mendy, 49-6-2 (30) with 1 no-contest, seemingly had no answer. The pace was slow, and remained so for much of the bout, but Johnston used lateral movement to prevent Mendy from setting himself to launch the heavy artillery.

According to WBC rules, when Mendy launched his head in the fifth, referee Lupe Garcia (Mexico) had no choice but to deduct a point. Rapidly falling behind, he rallied to claim the seventh, but was made to miss repeatedly while conceding round eight.

Pinpoint jabs snapped back Mendy's head in the ninth, and in the 10th, the best stanza of the bout, the Frenchman had to give ground before mounting a spirited response in the final half-minute. He tried to maintain his momentum into the last two rounds, throwing speculative but telegraphed lefts in an effort to land a conclusive blow. But Johnston, bleeding from round five on, remained cool and landed several big lefts to earn the approval of the judges.

Daniel Van de Wiele (Belgium) and Jose Juan Guerra (Mexico) scored for the American by 117-114 and 116-114, respectively. Angel Luis Guzman (Mexico) had it 115-114 for Mendy. THE RING had Johnston in front by 114-113.

Promoter: AB Stars Productions

(3-1-97)

Brian Doogan

Yong Soo Choi W 12 Lakva Sim

Songnam, South Korea: Rugged infighter Choi retained the WBA junior lightweight title, earning a split decision over the powerpunching Sim at Songnam Gymnasium. It was Choi's fourth defense.

The 25-year-old Choi, 129½, South Korea, started aggressively against Sim, 129½, who was attempting to become the first Mongolian to win a world title. Sim had compiled an amateur record of 152-12 (119), and despite his lack of pro experience, was viewed as a legitimate threat.

Sim, 26, took round two by scoring with jabs and right uppercuts. Frustrating the challenger by moving inside, Choi punched to the head and body in taking the third, fourth, and fifth.

Back came Sim, 5-1 (4), in the sixth and seventh, during which he punched freely. Operating behind a peekaboo defense, Choi, 22-2 (13), rebounded to rally over the next three stanzas. However, he was penalized for butting by referee Tony Weeks (USA) in the ninth.

Sensing that he was behind on points, Sim forced Choi to the ropes and won the 11th and 12th rounds. It wasn't enough, as Ove Ovessen (Denmark) and Chalerm Prayadsab (Thailand) scored for Choi by 115-114 and 114-113, respectively. Derek Milham (Australia) had Sim ahead by 115-113.

The difference was Choi's experience and expertise at infighting. With a few more fights against world-class opposition, Sim could win a world title in his second try.

Promoter: Former IBF junior featherweight champion Seung Hoon Lee's Kukdong Promotions

(2-1-97)

Joe Koizumi

Sirimongkol Singmanasuk W 12 Jose Sarabia

Nakhom Phanom, Thailand: Teenager Singmanasuk exchanged knockdowns with the game Sarabia and retained the WBC bantamweight title by unanimous decision in an exciting bout fought in an outdoor stadium after a heavy rainfall. It was the 19-year-old Singmanasuk's first defense since succeeding Wayne McCullough, who has moved up to junior featherweight. The Thai previously reigned as the interim champion.

Sarabia, 25, forced the fight from the start, with Singmanasuk seeking to counterpunch. In the third, Sarabia, 21-5-3 (17), dropped the champion with a right cross. From the fourth on, however, Singmanasuk, 14-0 (5), gained an edge by landing straight, accurate punches. For his part, Sarabia loaded up and mostly missed with big rights.

In the seventh, Sarabia appeared to slip on the wet canvas after absorbing a jab. It was ruled a knockdown, and Singmanasuk subsequently swarmed, downing the Mexican twice more before the round's end. Singmanasuk tried for the finish in the eighth, then, sensing Sarabia's durability, changed gears in the ninth and countered his way to the final bell.

Jae Bon Kim (South Korea) and Franz Marti (Switzerland) both scored 115-111 and Henry Elespuru (USA) 115-110.

Promoter: Sonbhop Srisomvongse

(2-15-97)

Joe Koizumi

Gerry Penalosa W 12 Hiroshi Kawashima

Tokyo, Japan: In a hard-fought battle of fellow southpaws, the powerpunching Penalosa remained aggressive, hurting defending WBC super flyweight champion Kawashima and scoring a well-received split decision at Ryogoku Sumo Arena. It was Kawashima's seventh defense.

The 26-year-old Kawashima, 115, Japan, was befuddled by both the pressure and high guard of Penalosa, 114½, Philippines. Penalosa, the younger brother of two-division former champion Dodie Boy Penalosa, took the lead by scoring with straight lefts in the first three rounds. Just before the bell ending the second, such a left caught Kawashima on the temple, sending him down. However, referee Richard Steele (USA) ruled it a slip.

Turned loose, Kawashima, 20-3-1 (14), punched strongly to the body in dominating the fourth through the seventh. His best moment came in the sixth, when a right followed by a one-two staggered the challenger. Penalosa, 25, backed to the ropes as Kawashima followed with a barrage.

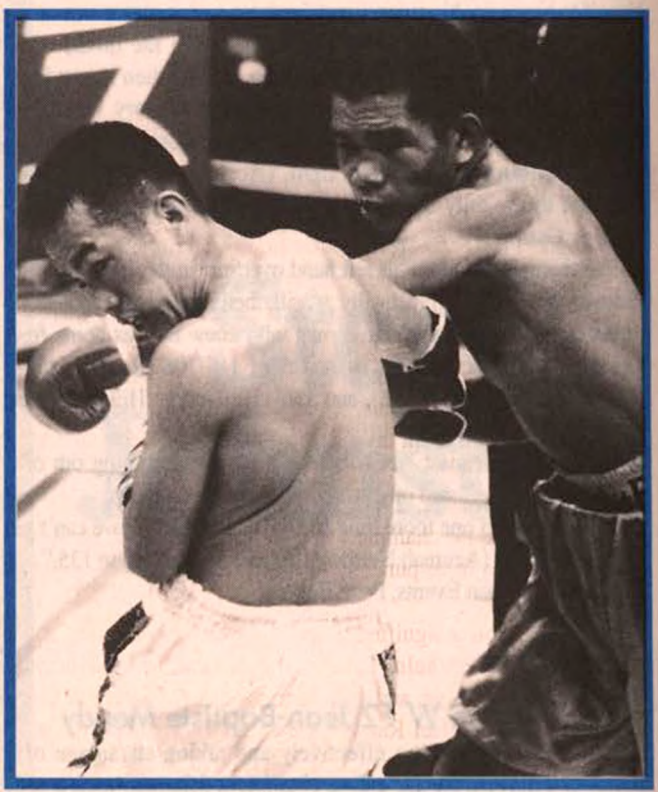
Fighting like a smaller version of Ike Quartey, Penalosa, 35-1-1 (21), regained control in the eighth, hammering Kawashima with long right-left combinations. Kawashima came back to take the ninth, but the challenger controlled the last three rounds, stalking Kawashima all the way. Kawashima is called "Untouchable" because of his outstanding defensive skills. On this night, the nickname didn't apply.

Tom Kaczmarek (USA) and Guillermo Ayon (Mexico) scored for Penalosa by 116-112 and 115-114, respectively. Rudy Ortega (USA) had Kawashima in front by 115-114.

Promoter: Yonekura Promotions

(2-20-97)

Joe Koizumi



Penalosa's performance turned heads

Nate Miller KO 2 Alexander Gurov

Fort Lauderdale, Florida: Miller's fourth defense of the WBA cruiserweight title, which was held at the Theater Nightclub and Concert Hall, was perhaps his easiest. The 33-year-old Miller, 188, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, punished mandatory challenger Gurov, 190, Paris, France, via the Ukraine, with spearing jabs and hard right crosses that tenderized the challenger's face. Seemingly seconds after the opening bell, both of Gurov's cheeks were bruised, and the skin around his eyes was swelling.

The 25-year-old Gurov's southpaw stance caused Miller no problems whatsoever, though he occasionally distracted the champion by stepping on Miller's lead foot. The 6'5" Gurov insisted on standing directly in front of "Mr. Miller," and he offered almost no head movement. He was a knockout waiting to happen.

Miller, 30-4 (26), patiently waited for the right opening, and he found it 1:15 into the second round, when he unleashed a lead right that crashed against Gurov's chin and sent him to the canvas. In obvious distress, Gurov, 18-2-1 (13), struggled to his feet at the count of nine. Within seconds he was down again, the result of two right uppercuts. The third knockdown came when Miller landed a left uppercut. The three-knockdown rule was in effect, with the end coming at the 1:54 mark.

The referee was George Alonso (USA). The judges were Franz Marti (Switzerland), Guy Jutras (Canada), and Stuart Winston (USA).

Gurov said of the first knockdown, "I didn't see the right hand coming. After that, I was too hurt to do anything.

"That was pretty," Miller said of the first knockdown. "I knew I could hit him with the right hand at any time. I just had to step in there and do it."

The bout was televised by Showtime.

Promoter: Don King

(2-22-97)

Ken Knox

Jose Bonilla KO 7 Hiroki Ioka

Osaka, Japan: WBA flyweight champion Bonilla, 111½, floored Ioka, 112, Japan, relentlessly battered him, and registered a stoppage win at 2:49 of the seventh round at the Osaka Central Gymnasium. It was Bonilla's first defense since dethroning Saen Sow Ploenchit last November.

A former strawweight and junior flyweight champion, Ioka, 28, was attempting to become the first fighter from the Orient to win titles in three different divisions. He failed miserably in a one-sided bout.

The shorter Bonilla, 29, scored with big rights in the first round. Ioka forced the champion to retreat in the second, but in the closing seconds, a three-punch combination dropped him onto the seat of his pants.

Capitalizing on a significant speed advantage, Bonilla, 22-3 (11), began to overwhelm Ioka in the third. Each subsequent round featured a beating, and with Ioka, 30-6-1 (16), pinned along the ropes, referee Rafael Ramos (USA) called a halt in the seventh.

The judges were Luis Rivera (USA), Rodolfo Maldonado (Panama), and Moo Hong Moon (South Korea).

So far, at least, Bonilla is proving to be a stronger and smarter fighter than expected.

Promoter: Hiroaki Tsuda's Green Tsuda Promotions

(2-25-97)

Joe Koizumi

Photo by Tom Casino/Showtime

Miller dutifully chopped down Gurov

Yokthai Sithoar W 12 Aquiles Guzman

Chachengsao, Thailand: Unbeaten Thai Sithoar kept the WBA junior bantamweight title, whipping mandatory challenger and former flyweight champion Guzman in the late rounds and winning a unanimous decision. It was the 21-year-old Sithoar's second defense.

It wasn't an easy fight for Sithoar, who willingly mixed it up with the shorter, infighting challenger. In the third, Venezuela's Guzman, 31, floored an off-balance Sithoar with a bodyshot, but referee Rudy Battle (USA) ruled a slip. One round later, Guzman strangely changed his tactics, opting to box at long range and confusing the Thai with one-twos. Sithoar rallied to take the fifth, and from the sixth through the 10th, he attacked while Guzman countered. Those stanzas were particularly difficult to score, with Sithoar more aggressive and Guzman more accurate.

Sithoar, 13-0 (8), cemented his victory by outfighting Guzman, 12-11-3 (7), over the last two rounds. Rodolfo Hill (Panama) scored 119-111, Hector Hernandez (Mexico), and Lou Tabat (USA) 115-113.

Promoter: Songchai Ratanasuban

(3-1-97)

Joe Koizumi

Danny Romero KO 6 Jaji Sibali

Albuquerque, New Mexico: In perhaps his last bout before squaring off with Johnny Tapia, IBF junior bantamweight champion Romero reminded his crosstown rival of his one-punch power with an annihilation of mandatory challenger Sibali at the Albuquerque Convention Center. It was Romero's second defense.

The 22-year-old Romero, 114½, Albuquerque, initially met resistance, as Sibali, 114¼, East London, South Africa, rumbled at close

(Continued on page 56)

Camacho-Leonard

(Continued from page 37)

Leonard finally connected with a good lead-off right to the face, forcing Camacho to tie up. Then, moments after trying to go to the body, Sugar Ray lost his balance and tumbled to the canvas. It was an amazing sight for anyone who remembered him as one of the most gifted movers in the game. Leonard once had the fastest hands in boxing, and footwork to match. Now he couldn't stand up even when he wasn't being hit.

What was left of the old Sugar Ray surfaced in the second round. He opened with a lead right that jolted Camacho. Then, circling to his left, Leonard began tapping Camacho with the jab, clearly trying to set up a big right hand. It wasn't the Leonard fans had long ago fallen in love with, the pretty-boy killer who buried Thomas Hearns under an avalanche of punches. Just an old guy trying to apply the fundamentals—jab, jab, right hand.

For a few brief moments, it worked. Camacho started bleeding from his right nostril. Leonard explored, jabbing the body. Camacho earned a warning from referee Joe Cortez for hitting behind the head. Gathering confidence, Leonard carried the action after the bell. It was the only round he won on the cards.

A coiled Camacho burst out for the third with a double-jab and hard straight left. A hooking left by Camacho sent Leonard stumbling across the ring. Leonard recovered and tried to wade in, and Camacho met him with stiff counters and assumed total control. Leonard faked a bolo punch at the bell, but it was empty bravado.

Camacho got busy early in the fourth and Leonard tried another old guy's tactic, one Muhammad Ali used so effectively in his declining years: flurry and tie up. But the clinches brought the fighters' heads together, and whether from a punch or butt, Leonard emerged with a cut over his left eyelid. It was in a bad spot, but wouldn't effect the outcome of the fight. That's because there was only one round to go.

Camacho ripped Leonard with two hard straight lefts to open the fifth. The two tied up in a corner, and when they came apart, Camacho unloaded a powerful left in an exchange. Leonard went down, confused and in pain. He rose at the count of four, and after Cortez reached eight, Leonard backed up against the ropes for what should have been the last time in his career.

Never known as a brilliant finisher, Camacho waded in and cleaned him up with 27 unanswered punches. His hands flashed in a blur over and over again—a left, two rights, a huge left—and as Leonard sagged helplessly, Cortez came between them and cradled Leonard's head in his arms.

The time of the stoppage was the 1:08 mark. The judges were Tim Figley, Mike Pernick, and Deborah Barnes.

It should have been the end, but the show, unfortunately, was only beginning. Midway through the postfight press conference, Leonard arrived. His face was a wreck. He could barely walk. He needed two men locked under his arms just to make it up two steps to his seat at the dais. If you hadn't been hardened by years of hanging around the con men who infest the sport of boxing, your heart might have gone out to him.

In tow were two physicians, Scott Steingard and Robert Carl, who were there to give credence to yet another excuse by Leonard for a bad performance. This time it was a torn calf muscle. Leonard said he suffered the injury January 31 in training and virtually ceased sparring after that.

"No one knew of the injury," Leonard said. "We thought we were past that. I felt good."

Longtime Leonard camp coordinator J.D. Brown spoke of Sugar Ray's courage in the face of pain.

"We started to think about canceling the fight," Brown said, "but Ray thought he could defy the odds."

The doctors also played their part in the alibi, even going so far as to pull out of a medicine bag the pain-killer Leonard received by injection just hours before the fight.

"Do not write this is the reason I lost," Leonard said. "I lost to a better man."

Of course, Leonard wanted no one to believe that, even though it was the truth. Leonard conducted the press conference like a man staging his own funeral to see who will cry. Indeed, there were those in the room who cheered him for bravely pressing on despite the injury. And also there were those who not only thought he was full of it, but believed he had ripped off the crowd and the pay-per-view audience by fighting as damaged goods. After all, Leonard took home a reported $4-million for a fight in which, at times, he could barely stand up.

In retrospect, Camacho had the best line of the night. When asked if Leonard should retire, Camacho said, "If he's able to pick up that kind of money, f___ it, get your ass kicked."

Six days later, Leonard said he'd be back. For what? Leonard-Duran IV? What's the point?

It's too bad a smart man like Leonard refuses to read the writing when it's so perfectly legible. Everybody gets old. The trick is to learn to live with it. Why do boxers have so much trouble with that?

Ray, it's over. ■

John Scheinman is a freelance writer based in Washington, D.C.

New Faces

(Continued from page 16)

told him was to do what he wanted for himself, not for me, and to be the best. By the time he was 10, I couldn't keep him out of the gym."

When he was 11, Mitchem's already immense interest in boxing grew into an obsession. It was 1988, and the Mitchem family was still living in Lincolnton. That year's Olympic team, which included Riddick Bowe and Roy Jones, was matched against a Canadian team in nearby Charlotte, and the Mitchems were there as spectators. Brandon was mesmerized after seeing Todd Foster deposit his opponent on the canvas with a left hook he says still ranks as one of the best he has ever seen.

More significant was the friendship he established with Kelcie Banks. At the time, Banks was considered a shoo-in to win a gold medal, and as a result, was garnering an inordinate amount of press. "He took me up to his room and gave me a hat and a photo, and a lot of advice," recalls Mitchem. "He spent a lot of time with me, and I was very excited. I decided that day that I was going to represent the United States at the 1996 Olympics. I figured out

in my mind that I would be 19, and the timing would be perfect."

Over the next four years Mitchem won every attainable title in North Carolina, but ran out of opponents and sparring partners in the process. It got to the point where the only sparring available was with his father in the basement of their home. Mitchem's career was at a crossroads. The family, including Mitchem's brother Cameron, who didn't have the same level of interest in boxing, realized Brandon had a very real opportunity to become an Olympian. It would be beneficial for him to be close to the action, even though the Games were still four years away.

With a stellar amateur boxing program in Augusta, Georgia, Randy Mitchem gave up his job as a Pepsi Cola route man and relocated the family there.

"Boxing was dead in North Carolina and we were determined to get Brandon to the Olympics," he explains. "We knew the training in Augusta would be second to none because the [1996] Olympics were going to be in Georgia. The best talent would be there, so that was the place to bring out the best in Brandon and get him seen."

The move indeed propelled Mitchem's career forward and earned him a national reputation in the amateur boxing community. He won medals in international competitions against France, Norway, Poland, Lithuania, and Ireland, and became the 1996 National Golden Gloves champion. Along the way, he won a host of other amateur titles. But his Olympic dream came to an abrupt halt when he was narrowly outpointed on two occasions by eventual Olympian Fernando Vargas. Many feel Mitchem did enough to win both of those fights. In their second bout, he was defeated by a score of 17-14. Initially, he was devastated.

"I know that every loser thinks he won, but in my case people around the world thought I won," he says. "The fight was on television, and promoters were calling from everywhere saying I got robbed, and that I should turn pro with them. I realized then that I had outgrown the amateurs, and I've never looked back. Now I'm putting the same energy into becoming a world champion."

Prior to leaving the amateur ranks with a record of 183-17, Mitchem found himself at another crossroads. He had graduated from West Side High School in Augusta with honors and was offered a prestigious Hope Grant, a scholarship that would have enabled him to study occupational therapy at Augusta College. While he did spend two semesters there, he eventually decided to move to Las Vegas and embark on a professional career. "I lost my motivation as an amateur, but knew I'd get it back as a pro," he says.

His father says the decision was not easy, but "Brandon realized you can always go to school when you are older, but you can't box when you are older. Brandon invested too much in his dream to see it go away so easy."

After much consideration, Mitchem signed a managerial contract with businessman Joe Kutilek and a promotional agreement with Mat Tinley. Tinley's company, America Presents, also promotes Wayne McCullough. Tinley recently signed a television deal with the Fox Network to showcase his fighters. What made the pot all the more sweet for Mitchem was the fact that the esteemed Eddie Futch would train him, along with Thell Torrence. Randy Mitchem elected to take a back-seat position as an assistant because, he says, "I'm a boxing man through and through, and I know how hard it is for a father-and-son team to make it in this business. I didn't want to be his trainer, but I wanted to be involved. These people understood that, and it has worked out fine. Other promoters wanted me to drop my son off at the gym and go home."

Kutilek says the addition of the senior Mitchem to the camp has not only been helpful, but has produced none of the usual dissension associated with such a scenario. "Normally, it's not a healthy situation, but these guys are more like brothers than father and son," he said. "Randy helps out with the training, and when Eddie and Thell are out of town, he's there every day with Brandon. It is a very good situation."

Once again the members of the Mitchem family found themselves relocating to further Brandon's career. Carol now works as an office manager, while Brandon and Randy train daily at the World Gym. The entire family is thrilled with the well-laid plan America Presents has mapped out for Mitchem's career. He is guaranteed multiple television dates and at least eight fights a year. While he is not yet earning big paydays, he's very happy with his situation. Says Randy, "Brandon made more for a four-rounder than I made for Simon Brown."

While Mitchem was scoring a one-sided decision against a tough Mexican named Francisco Mendez on Fox, analyst Tommy Morrison lauded the teenager and said, "He looks like he is on his way." Added blow-by-blow announcer Barry Tompkins, "He's only 19 years old, but does so many things pretty darn well."

Mitchem is a classic boxer whose only apparent flaw is his lack of a bone-crunching punch. His power is respectable, though, and should increase as his 5'11" frame fills out. His boxing savvy and ability to adapt to different styles should carry him a long way. He has already faced southpaws, as well as face-first brawlers and ring technicians.

In February, Mitchem stopped previously undefeated Charles Anaya, a clever boxer-puncher from Albuquerque who boasted a record of 5-0-1. Mitchem outboxed and outpunched his opponent en route to an impressive fourth-round TKO victory, his finest win to date.

Mitchem's strong sense of self and commitment to excellence is what attracted him to Futch. "I liked what I saw right away with him," said the normally tacit trainer, the E.F. Hutton of fistiana. "He has a lot of ability, a great personality, and a desire to learn. After every fight, the first thing he wants to know is what he did wrong. With his desire, in a few years everyone will be talking about him."

All of this is not lost on Mitchem, who constantly marvels at his good fortune, although he is too modest and unassuming to realize or admit he is responsible for making so much of it happen. "Eddie has come into the gym and told me how much he enjoys working with me, and what a thrill it is to be around young people with so much enthusiasm," he says. "Do you know how happy that makes me feel? I have more enthusiasm now than I ever had, even when all I thought about was being an Olympian.

"You know, I really hate losing, it's the worst feeling in the world. But I never get used to winning. Winning is everything. I have a winning team, and I really can't see anything going wrong." ■

Robert Mladinich is a freelance writer based in New York City.

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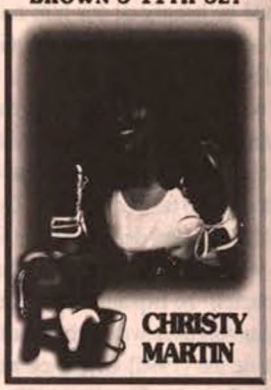

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Vuyani Bungu

(Continued from page 23)

"It's teamwork; it's not an individual thing," he says. "It's like we work together, we are united. We take care of each other, we correct each other's mistakes."

Says Bungu, "We are like brothers in the gym, and our manager, Mr. Mzi, is like our father."

"Mr. Mzi" is Mzi Mnguni, a businessman from East London's Mdantsane township, who got involved in boxing because "I was a lover of the sport. I never boxed myself, not even as an amateur, but I used to go all over to watch boxing. The youngsters saw me at a lot of fights and asked me to help them," he says.

"I didn't see myself as a trainer or a manager, but as a guardian. I organized gloves and places to train. Then I found myself more involved, becoming a second, then a promoter. I realized that some of the fights I wanted to see my fighters getting, they didn't get. So I did it myself."

Mnguni's efforts have been boosted by the world title triumphs of Ncita, Botile, and Bungu. And they in turn were inspired by Mdantsane's first great boxing hero, junior lightweight Happyboy Mgxaji. "He fought with style, he was strong, and whenever he fought here, 25,000 people would go to the Sisa Dukashe stadium to watch," Bungu says.

Mgxaji never won a world title—he was stopped by WBA titleholder Sammy Serrano in 1979—but, according to Bungu, that never mattered. "He was a hero," Bungu says. "I'm really talking about a hero. He would drive his Mercedes-Benz through the township and we would all run behind him. He was the reason everybody wanted to be a boxer, even a boy at the age of five."

Mnguni recognizes Mgxaji's inspiration, but believes the passion for boxing in the area is rooted in traditions that go back into a distant past. "Looking back to the history of our forefathers, there was stick-fighting that was done by young men the same age as these men," Mnguni says.

"As a young man, you needed to show yourself, and you used to be popular if you beat others in stick-fighting. Stick-fighting has vanished now because of changing times, but it's been replaced by a leather sort of fighting. So I am a bridge between the old and the new."

Bungu's father, Daniel, was a formidable stick-fighter in his youth. "I never saw him, but some of his friends tell me he was very tough," Vuyani says. And with two of his sons in the professional ring—Vuyani's younger brother Dudu is a contender for the national flyweight title—the father will tell you he passed his fighting spirit on down the family line. "They take after me because I was a strong man when I used to fight with the sticks," he says.

But Vuyani says there were much grittier reasons for taking his step into the ring. "I was not born to be a boxer; I was just a shy guy," he says. "But because of the situation at home, things forced me to be a professional boxer. I thought the boxing would do better things for my parents."

The "situation at home" in Mdantsane township was a two-room house with no running water. Daniel Bungu had developed asthma and could hardly work. Vuyani's mother, Lillian, toiled as a domestic worker in East London 40 kilometers away and could come home only once a month. "Then we would have some meat and vegetables," Bungu recalls. "Otherwise, all we would get was half a loaf of bread and a cup of tea."

A diligent student, Vuyani was intent on becoming a teacher, but black schools were in constant turmoil with the student boycotts that were central to the anti-apartheid struggle. Mdantsane was one of the country's most militant townships. "The schools were closed for three years, and that was when I started thinking, *Let me forget about school and concentrate on boxing*," Bungu recalls.

In his pro debut, Bungu knocked out Xolela Makhuluma in the fourth round. "My mother was very proud," he recalls, "and with the money we bought chicken pieces and rice and potatoes, a loaf of bread, paraffin, and some candles."

There was, of course, more to come.

"He always told us he was going to buy a house for us," Lillian Bungu says as she relaxes in the comfortable sitting room of her spacious home. In 1990, after Bungu won the national title, he was as good as his word. "We were so surprised because at the time he was just a kid," she says.

The lives that Bungu, Ncita, and others have hammered into shape with their fists provide powerful inspiration for others, Mnguni says. "Good boxers always come from very poor places, and we are the second poorest region in the country," he says. "Our people realize they can live through boxing. So when they fight, they see it as a way of improving their life. And that's the only way they can survive."

At the Nyameko School in Mdantsane, boys carrying their shorts and vests in plastic bags are starting out on that road to survival. Some are still small and skinny, with broomstick arms. Others are starting to develop muscle and shape. "This is how it started for me," says Bungu, gesturing around the broken-windowed room, its well-thumped punchbag hanging at one end.

That's all this gym has—no weights or speedballs, no changing facilities or water supply. "This is where Welcome Ncita and I learned to fight," Bungu says. "There isn't much, but in the end we were both world champions."

(Continued on page 56)

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Vuyani Bungu

(Continued from page 55)

"Nobody is pushing these guys," he says as training gets underway in earnest, a good hour before the trainer is expected to arrive. All the while a cluster of much smaller boys stand wide-eyed in one corner, one of them occasionally stepping out to shadowbox, then retreating back into the safety of the group. No matter, says Ncita. Their time will come.

"Some kids go to the gym at the age of four or five, and they grew up with boxing like we did," Ncita continues. "It's a sport that's in the mouth of everybody in the township. Wherever you go, in a taxi, on a bus, in a train, you see kids shadowboxing in the street. You go to the clubs and the pubs, they are talking about boxing. It's in the mouth—it's what we eat for breakfast, it's what we eat for our supper.

"We sleep with it, we wake up with it." ■

John Perlman is a freelance writer based in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Ringside Reports

(Continued from page 51)

range. Ultimately, however, the 29-year-old challenger couldn't hope to match Romero's power.

Sibali was impressive in the opening round, connecting with a hook and a crisp counter right. At round's end, however, he returned to his corner with a welt over his left eye. In the last 20 seconds of round two, the junior banties traded inside, with Romero gaining an edge by scoring with uppercuts.

Early in the third, Sibali sponged a left hook, his glove seemingly touching the canvas. Referee Larry Chavez (USA) didn't rule a knockdown, but Romero took the opportunity to try for a quickie finish. He began landing long rights, and a knockout, or at least a knockdown, seemed imminent.

Romero, 30-1 (27), almost floored Sibali, 22-6-2 (13), with a jab in the fourth. Later in the round, a pair of rights landed flush and the challenger was reduced to lunging inside in an effort to smother Romero's power.

The steel-chinned Sibali rumbled competitively in the fifth, but 40 seconds into the sixth, two rights left him dizzy. The champion followed with two right uppercuts and a long right, then seconds later downed the South African with another right uppercut. Sibali tried to rise, then fell back down and was counted out at the 2:34 mark.

The judges were Jim Ashe, Frank Skilbred, and Adalaide Triplett, all from the USA.

"The guy was real crafty," said Romero. "He backed away from my right hands, so I had to cut him down with bodyshots."

Regarding Tapia, who stopped Jorge Barrera on the same card, Romero said, "I gotta dispose of a little gnat that's been all over. It's time to get rid of it."

It's anticipated that Romero and Tapia will clash in July 18, in Las Vegas.

The bout was televised by HBO.

Promoter: Cedric Kushner Promotions

(3-8-97) ■

David Reid

(Continued from page 27)

During the five-minute ride to the Taj Mahal, Caplan drives like she's in the Indy 500, darting in and out of traffic, all the while carrying on a running debate with Reid about whether or not O.J. Simpson is guilty.

"Come on," pleads Caplan good-naturedly. "Just admit it one time. You know he did it."

***

Reid lays on the floor of his dressing room, puts a towel over his face, folds his hands over his chest, and tries to relax. Conversation ceases and a peace slowly settles over the room—but not for long.

First, Grant Phillips, the fight manager and boxing equipment manufacturer who made Reid's gold trunks and robe, stops by to wish him luck. Next, two-division former champ Buddy McGirt pays his respects.

"He's got to concentrate on the fight," growls Jenkins, displeased by the party-like atmosphere that threatens to overrun the dressing room.

All thoughts of a quick snooze gone, Reid springs to his feet and begins to shadowbox.

Following the prefight urine test, Mitchell wraps Reid's hands. Jenkins stands by his side, peeling off strips of tape and handing them to the trainer like an operating room nurse assisting a sur-

geon. Mitchell goes over the fight plan for the umpteenth time.

"We're just gonna go out behind the jab and box him," he says in a calm, reassuring voice. "We ain't going for the knockout. Make things happen with your movement. I wanna see you put combinations together. Remember, speed is power. You don't have to load up."

It's approximately one hour till fight time. There's no laughter now, and people are speaking in whispers. Mat Tinley, president of America Presents, enters the room and says something into Reid's ear. The fighter nods and continues shadowboxing.

"Hear that flicking noise?" asks Jenkins. "That's natural snap. That means he's turning 'em over like a seasoned pro."

At 9:14, Mitchell puts on the pads, and Reid starts to warm up in earnest, ripping fast, crisp shots into his trainer's mitts.

"You're doing it perfect," says Mitchell. "You're punching good."

Mitchell laces up Reid's gloves, then helps him on with his robe, the one with "The American Dream" emblazoned across the back.

"Five minutes to air," yells a member of HBO's production staff as Jenkins applies a thin layer of grease to the fighter's face.

When HBO gives the signal for him to leave the dressing room, Reid pumps his fist in the air and shouts, "It's on, it's on."

The procession goes up the stairs and down the hallway, then pauses at the threshold, just outside the service entrance to the Grand Ballroom. The anticipation is palatable. You can see and hear the capacity crowd at the other end of the tunnel smell the excitement in the air. Reid jogs in place, and Mitchell repeats his mantra-like instructions—"Jab ... move ... don't go for the knockout."

Somebody hollers "Go!" and Reid begins his ringwalk to the sound of Whitney Houston's "The Greatest Love Of All." The crowd, which includes Reid's mother, various other members of his family, and a large contingent of homeboys from his old North Philly neighborhood, gives him a hero's welcome.

Ring announcer Mark Beiro introduces the fighters, and referee Earl Brown gives them their final instructions. At 9:47, the bell rings, and Reid's first professional fight is, at long last, underway.

Reid jabs and circles, then tries a right that falls short. Calderon looks confident, but is also short with his first few offerings. Suddenly, Reid steps inside and unloads a right uppercut that lands on his opponent's chin. A followup hook misses, but Calderon is already on his way to the floor, his equilibrium spinning wildly out of control.

The noise is deafening as Brown counts over the downed fighter. But Calderon gamely makes it to his feet, and following the mandatory eight-count, is ready to fight on.

Forgetting everything that Mitchell told him about going to the body if he hurts his man, Reid rushes in and drives Calderon into the ropes with a right to the head. But the Ohio fighter rides out the onslaught, punches back just enough to keep Reid honest, and by the end of the round appears fully recovered.

Over the next three rounds, Reid sticks to the fight plan, jabbing, moving, and occasionally winging a hard punch to the head. His speed, power, and athletic ability are more than enough to control the bout, but flaws are evident. He throws most of his power shots from too far away, pulls back instead of countering when Calderon fires, and worst of all, displays a suicidal tendency to stick out his face when throwing a big punch.

Even so, there's no doubt who the winner is, and when Beiro announces the scores of 39-36 and 40-35 (twice) in Reid's favor, the triumphant fighter blows kisses to the cheering crowd. Then Reid reaches another career milestone—his first postfight interview with Larry Merchant.

Back in the dressing room, Mitchell delivers his critique: "I give David a B. He made some little mistakes. I told him not to go for the knockout, but the first couple of minutes, that's what he was going for. But he settled down and started to box. The most important thing is that he stayed behind the jab. I'm glad it went four rounds. The knockouts are gonna come, but I want him to learn the game and learn it well. Tonight was a good lesson."

"This is the best part," says matchmaker Brown, handing Reid a check, which the

(Continued on page 59)

"The total effect is a ★ KNOCKOUT." ★
Publisher's Weekly

The Boxer's Workout clearly and systematically presents all the elements of a sound boxer's workout program, with unprecedented step-by-step photo-illustrations of the essential moves and punches. It was written by writer-boxer Peter DePasquale, with veteran coaches Al Gavin and Bob Jackson of New York's Gramercy Boxing Gym.

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David Reid

(Continued from page 57)

fighter kisses and passes on to Mitchell.

Calderon, sporting a couple of minor abrasions, comes into the room to offer his congratulations, and the fighters embrace.

"I couldn't get nothin' going," says Calderon. "I was real tight. Maybe because I was on HBO. But I want to give him credit. I was 10-0, and he beat me. For a 154-pounder, he's got a lot of power. He's gonna be a force. All those champs better watch out in a couple of years."

***

Saturday, March 22, 12:30 a.m.: Reid, wearing a stylish, double-breasted suit and an ear-to-ear grin, stands outside the Hard Rock Cafe with Dan Goossen, America Presents' chief operations officer. The fighter has only one ticket to the HBO-sponsored postfight party, but that doesn't stop him from ushering what seems like half of North Philly past the doorman. You can get away with that sort of thing when you're living "The American Dream." ■

deWit & O'Sullivan

(Continued from page 31)

of his own money to promote his fights from '84 to '88. It's one of the reasons deWit's career was so brief.

"I wasn't enjoying it, worrying about the promotional end of fighting," says deWit, a criminal defense lawyer currently making a six-figure salary in Calgary, Alberta. "I was worrying about putting fannies in the seats."

Despite the distractions and bad career decisions, deWit and O'Sullivan plodded along, building their records without any real gut-checking scraps. Eventually, it came time for the proverbial acid test—facing a world-class opponent. Both camps were confident, sure their boys were ready for the jump.

O'Sullivan went first. In June 1986, making his debut before a large American TV audience, he bumped into a buzzsaw banger in Simon Brown, who soon after would become IBF welterweight champion. For two years O'Sullivan had been stepping off a curb every time he fought. Against Brown he plunged into the Grand Canyon, face-first, in the dark. Brown slaughtered O'Sullivan in three nasty rounds. The Irish-Canadian was exposed—no chin, no defense, little offense—and would never be the same again.

DeWit's first major challenge met with equal brutality. It became known as the St. Valentine's Day Massacre: February 14, 1987, at Regina, Saskatchewan.

Smokin' Bert Cooper came to town looking to put on the big hurt. A Mike Tyson clone with a murderous right hand, Cooper was a tornado of pain production. Drugs and the fast-lane lifestyle that would soon derail his career hadn't yet taken their toll. He was in his prime, and in two rounds it was over. The pride of Grande Prairie was pounded to a pulp, knocked down and cut, wearing a mask of fear that made TV viewers shudder. Although he would fight for another year, deWit's stint in the pros was basically over. He hit like an ox, but unfortunately moved like one, too. Cooper crushed his dream. It was a miserable start to a year that would get only worse.

DeWit's father, Len, and younger brother, Theo, died in a twin-engine plane crash in June '87, leaving the heavyweight with only his mother, Christine.

"We were a very close-knit family," says deWit, who continued to fight until a career-ending victory over Olympic nemesis Tillman the following year. "Half of my family is gone. It was a difficult time, the toughest thing in my life. I've never gotten over it. It haunts me; I think about it every day. Believe me, it never leaves you."

Drained by the deaths and his devastating defeat in the ring, deWit decided to retire. His career mark: 20-1-1 (14).

"I wasn't improving as a fighter—the desire wasn't there—and it was time to move on," he explains. "You've got to move on and have something to move on to, and lots of boxers don't. Lots can't move on because they love the game so much. I purposely stayed away. Boxing is in my blood and always will be. It never goes away. I started from scratch going back to school."

It was as tough as any challenge he had ever stared down in the ring. Returning to school in his late-20s, when most college kids were in their teens, was a major adjustment. Applying his mind instead of his fists required focus, intelligence, and an iron-willed discipline.

Temptation was ever-present. George Foreman's people offered deWit a few hundred thousand dollars to get back in the ring in 1988. He declined the instant riches.

"Going back to school was a huge decision for me," he says. "Going through law school was a major challenge, and I'm awfully proud of that.

"Boxing teaches you things—how to deal with pressure, that you don't always win. It's taught me perseverance and lessons about life that I use in the courtroom all the time."

During these years, both deWit and O'Sullivan were married and started families. As deWit broke from the path of boxing and forged ahead with his law career, O'Sullivan, who had quit halfway to a science degree at the University of Toronto, tried to salvage his fight career.

In 1988, he retired, severing his connection with Trainer and Leonard after back-to-back losses to journeymen Luis Santana and Donovan Boucher. Returning in 1990, he fought under the guidance of former Tyson trainer Kevin Rooney. He was knocked out again by the very ordinary Alex Hilton in '92, and retired again. Five years later, he's back without Rooney, and with slurred speech and a desire to complete what he calls unfinished business.

"The game has never left me," O'Sullivan says with sincerity. "This is my last chance. I want a positive recollection when I retire. I have a finite time to get the job done."

Concerned critics, emanating mostly from Toronto, are scared for O'Sullivan, now 22-5 (16). They say he's another financially desperate, sop-worn pug one punch away from tragedy. They're probably right.

Predictably, O'Sullivan, who has had an exhaustive battery of neurological tests and has received the go-ahead from top Ontario physicians to fight, disputes their charges, saying he's healthy and stronger than ever now that trainer Clyde Gray has incorporated weightlifting into his training regimen.

(Continued on page 60)

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GRANT

deWit & O'Sullivan

(Continued from page 59)

"I feel good," he says, "so let me do what I want to do."

Comeback number two, he says, is "not based on financial concerns." Then, in the next breath: "Gotta feed the kids, feed the bank. My family will never go hungry." Pride won't let him come right out and say times have been lean for his brood.

Not exactly thrilled about O'Sullivan's return is his wife, Veronica, who stays at home tending to the needs of their four children.

"We never discussed this comeback," O'Sullivan says with a nervous laugh. "And I never asked her what she thought. Though some things discussed later on on the subject aren't printable."

Why, then, knowing the potential dangers, as well as the feelings of loved ones, does he continue to fight?

"I am not emotionally spent in boxing," O'Sullivan says. "It's not out of my system yet."

Even when he wasn't fighting, O'Sullivan continued to make his career as a boxer. Six days a week he teaches boxercise and boxing at Toronto's Premier Health Club, which is owned and operated by John Cardillo, backer and manager of O'Sullivan's latest comeback.

"I gain nothing financially from backing Shawn," says Cardillo, who admits he's a novice in the hurt business. "He started teaching boxercise and I got to know him. We're friends. He was very anxious to get back in the ring. He talked a long time. Shawn still has the skills.

"I wanted to help him get back on his feet financially. This is a personal thing for me. Life has been difficult for Shawn. His confidence was low when he first came to me."

In his big-brother mode, Cardillo chose not to put the blinders on when O'Sullivan approached him about reentering the game.

"When we brought him in," Cardillo recalls, "Clyde and I were very critical of him, his expectations and skills. His wife told me she didn't want a fifth child to take care of.

"Shawn sparred with Canadian welterweight champion Fitzroy Vanderpool and handled him. He's the best he's been in years—stronger and with better head movement."

O'Sullivan's lack of professional success in the past, adds Cardillo, must be blamed partly on previous management.

"Shawn's experience with Leonard and Trainer wasn't great," he said. "When he fought Brown, Leonard hugged *Brown* after the fight; you can see it on the tape of the fight. Shawn would never, ever say a bad thing about anybody. He's too nice a guy. But things weren't as rosy as the media portrayed them."

That very same negative thread wormed its way through deWit's pro career. Asked what he'd do differently, he doesn't hesitate: "I'd get better management—I'd change that. I'd just be a fighter. Billy Joe and Ben were none too happy when I quit. I put a great deal of thought into it and stuck with it."

With his four children and wife, Susan, deWit, 35, lives the good life in the affluent neighborhood of Bear's Paw, just outside of Calgary. Twelve-hour days at the blue-chip law firm of Evans, Martin, Wilson have afforded the deWit clan a lifestyle Willie could have only dreamed of a decade ago. His income allows his wife the old-fashioned luxury of being at home with their children, who, like their father, love physical activities.

"My kids skate, play hoops and hockey, enjoy life," sighs deWit, who's always on the go. "If I'm not at work, I'm running around, taking the kids to all their activities. Len is Daddy's boy—he loves sports. My wife, my kids are great—they are my life."

Still, boxing is something that clings to his heart. A heavybag hangs in the garage. A set of weights is in constant use. Not one fight on TV goes by without it being taped and watched over and over.

"I will always be a fighter," says deWit. "Boxing taught me many things."

The most important? When to quit.

When told about how his old Olympic teammate is 3-0 on yet another comeback and talking about fighting ring dinosaur Roberto Duran, deWit cringes. "Shawn has always had great heart," he says. "We were friends as Olympic teammates, but not bosom buddies, and that's because we were competitors. There was great compe-

tition between us, like siblings. But this comeback is not a smart thing to do. He's not going to get better at 34. He's passed his prime. But, hey, he has to do his own thing."

Like make his own decisions.

***

The Sweet Science of Bruising brought Shawn O'Sullivan and Willie deWit together, much like a father playing catch with his two sons. Over time they learned from the old man, absorbed his wisdom, and then tried to set out on their own. Their mentor never judged them, only watched and waited. That's all a mentor can do—teach and watch.

O'Sullivan and deWit traveled the same road for a time, then separated. DeWit left home, O'Sullivan stayed at home.

Today, deWit, the fighter, is living life. O'Sullivan, he's simply fighting for a life. ■

Warren Tasker is the Canadian correspondent for The Ring.

Felix Trinidad

(Continued from page 33)

leave—and with good reason. From the moment he entered the hotel until climbing into his car for the drive home, he was besieged by waiters, bellhops, dishwashers, bartenders, and front-desk personnel. Cameras appeared from nowhere, and autographs were signed a handful at a time. As a result, our interview stopped and started about a dozen times, and Trinidad barely touched his lunch, a personal pizza. (Ah, to be young and no longer have to make welterweight!) Maybe the champion could walk down Broadway with few interruptions, but on the island he's a superstar, matched in popularity only by baseball stars Roberto Alomar and Juan Gonzalez.

Flashing a genuine smile, Trinidad shook hands and happily posed with everyone who asked for an arm-around-the-champ picture. "It's like this everywhere we go," said Ojeda. "We're always running late because Tito never says no to anyone. But he honestly enjoys being with the people."

"Wilfredo Gomez, Wilfred Benitez, the adulation was there, but they didn't court the publicity," said Rivera Martino. "This kid is more conscious of the value of these things. Gomez, Benitez, they were comfortable among the public, but not as conscious of the value of being among the people."

Trinidad, 24, has always carried himself with poise both inside and outside the ring. He's not likely to lose focus or rush himself against Norris, a fighter who, while supremely talented, has not always displayed self-control. Who knows, in a pick-'em fight, such an intangible might determine the outcome.

"I credit two things for that," Trinidad said when complimented on his cool. "My self-confidence and my father, who's always at my side. I feel I have proper guidance and counseling."

In fact, Trinidad credits his father, Felix Sr., a former pro fighter, with just about everything that's right about his life. The senior Trinidad taught Tito how to box, and continues to train him. Their smooth relationship is in direct contrast to what was shared by triple-crown champion Benitez and his late father Gregorio. That tumultuous relationship is often cited as an example of why boxing fathers and sons can't possibly live and work in harmony.

"I respect him first of all as a father," Trinidad said. "And I respect him as a trainer. He also respects me. He knows how far he can go, and he doesn't get too intimate in my personal life. That's also a factor." (Coincidentally, Norris' father, Orlin Norris Sr., is also a part of his son's corner.)

Almost every fistic hero from Puerto Rico—Gomez, Benitez, Edwin Rosario, Esteban DeJesus, Carlos Ortiz—turned out to be self-destructive. So far, at least, Trinidad shows no signs of following his elders. He's separated from his wife, but he says his seven-month-old daughter, Ashley Nicole, creates a sense of responsibility. "I realize there are a lot of young ladies who are after me," Trinidad said

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with a laugh. "But I have control. It's just a matter of personal control."

"He doesn't need that much guidance because it's been put into him to be a good kid," said Rivera Martino. "He doesn't have to be watched that closely." But then came a warning from an insider who has seen the crash-landings of many a Puerto Rican world champion: "There's still time to see how he develops as a person. Look what happened to some of the others."

Hall of Famer Gomez is generally regarded as the finest Puerto Rican fighter in history. Should Trinidad defeat Norris, there might be two at the top. That's how important the fight is to both Trinidad and the island.

Asked to name the best fighters he's faced, Trinidad answered "Hector Camacho, Yori Boy Campas, and Maurice Blocker." Then he acknowledged that Norris is better than all of them. "He's a great fighter, a great puncher," Trinidad said. "But I have more ability. I can move around better, I'm very confident in my conditioning, and I have youth on my side." (Norris is 29.)

And what if the second-round jinx continues to haunt him?

"Any great fighter, if he's hit with a good, solid punch on the jaw, the normal thing to do is to go down," he said. "When I get in the ring, I'm confident I'm going to win. Sometimes it's not until I'm dropped that I realize I have to pick up the pace. There's no anger involved. Maybe the confidence is a negative factor. It's not until I get hit that my intensity goes up."

As lunch was cleared from the table, THE RING pointed out that if he's successful against Norris, Trinidad will instantly become far more familiar to American fans. What, then, should we know about him that we don't already know?

Trinidad thought for a while. "I hope to eventually speak English," he said. "And my message to the American fans is that I'm a great boxer, a great fighter whose image is clean and untouchable. I'm conscious of the fact that I'm a role model right now in Puerto Rico to young people and everyone else, and I'd like to maintain that. That's one of my goals."

Then, speaking English for the first time since arriving at the hotel, he said, "The winner and *new* champion ... " ■

Moore-Durelle

(Continued from page 45)

in the sporting pages of the '50s and '60s (he should be approaching 85 now), speaks in almost reverential terms about the impact of the fight on his life.

"If people can remember something for four decades and it can still cause them such jubilation, then I think it's worthwhile for me to remember and revere," he says emphatically. "I do know that I made an extraordinary effort in that fight in order to preserve my dignity and the dignity of boxing. I think I proved that I could fight with the very best men ... and that was the joy of my life—boxing."

The memories are incredibly fresh in the minds of both fighters, even if they are at odds regarding some between-rounds details.

The fight began with the venerable Moore, then 44, bobbing and weaving and taunting his opponent. But just a minute into the first round, Durelle sent the champ reeling with a hard right that had been set up by a disarming hook to the body. All

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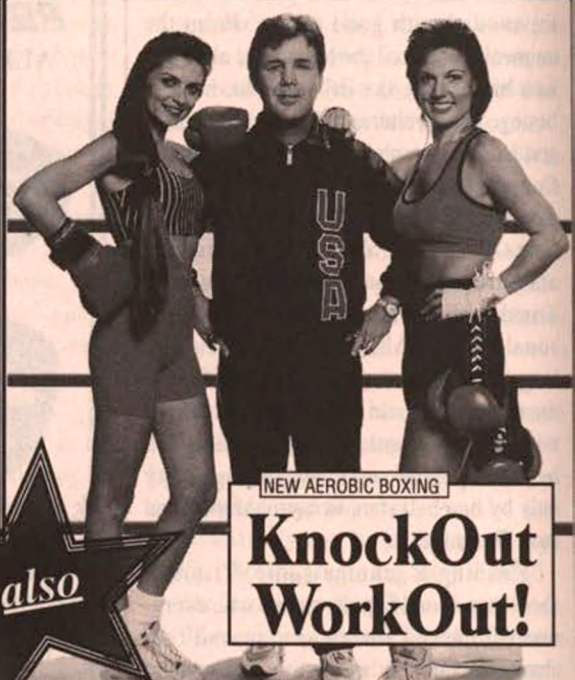

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across Canada's Maritime Provinces, in cities, towns, and isolated fishing villages, radios competed unsuccessfully with noisy, impromptu celebration.

"I had fought a lot of great punchers," recalls Moore. "And I could always handle them pretty well, but this guy hit me—oh, boy, he hit me harder than I'd ever been hit in my life—and my feet went up in the air, and I felt my head hit the canvas, and finally my feet came down and I remember I said, 'Wow, this guy can *hit!*'"

On the threshold of a quick and unexpected victory, Durelle, a 3-1 underdog, moved in like a shark sensing blood. "I always used the first round to loosen up," he explains. "You don't rush in against a guy like Archie Moore. I was going to waltz around for a while, but I had that opening and I drove it home. I should have finished him off, but he was so damn hard to hit."

Durelle soon floored the dazed champion again, and then for a third time, with a piston-like volley of rights and lefts. Both times Moore struggled to his feet, his legs wobbly. Only the sounding of the bell prevented a dramatic first-round upset.

"I thought to myself, *I'd better keep away from this guy or he's going to hurt me*, and then he hit me again and I thought he'd broken my head," recalls Moore, the pain of those punches plainly on his face. "I said to myself, *Well, I guess this is the end for me, but I'm going to fight this son of a bitch, or I'll die fighting him if it comes to that.* I had really reckoned that I would die fighting this man."

Durelle had unleashed his best spinach-powered punch and Moore had somehow withstood it. "I was amazed he didn't stay down after that shot I gave him," Durelle admits.

It was at this juncture that Durelle's manager, a grocery store manager named Chris Shaban, fearing a second-round ambush by the wounded but wily veteran, elected to play a waiting game. It was a strategy that would haunt Durelle and his advisers in the years to come.

"He should have followed up in that second round," confirms Moore. "He thought I was in better shape than I really was. He should have come out like he did in the first round, but he didn't. He hesitated ... and I hit him first. I think it was all the fault of his manager. He told Yvon, 'This guy's a fox, he might be foolin' you.' He tried to pick me off instead of rushing me off my feet, and that gave me a little time to let the fog clear a little bit."

Durelle defends the strategy as part of the overall fight plan. "In the second, I was afraid I'd get tired too fast," he says. "I wanted to coast so I could go the full 15 rounds. I really didn't think I could have finished him off in that second round. He was hard to get at, and so I had to fight a cagey fight."

The third and fourth rounds were uneventful, allowing Moore ample time to deal with the cobwebs. It wasn't until the fifth that the challenger was able to again inflict any real damage. Once more Durelle's potent right caught Moore flush, and once more the suave American collapsed like a soggy Dixie cup.

"When he knocked me down in the fifth round, he hit me just as hard as he had in the first, but by now I had gotten warmed up a bit," says Moore. It was at this point that the champion's superior handlers took over. Moore recalls the scene with great relish.

"When I staggered back to my corner to sit down, my manager and trainer were very clever," he says. "My trainer said, 'Stand up, Archie,' and when I stood up, he got in front of me and I was facing Yvon over my trainer's shoulder. And my trainer said, 'See your wife?' and I said no. And he said, 'Well, smile at her anyway,' so I smiled. And then my trainer told me to wave at my wife, and I told him that I didn't see her, but he insisted that I wave anyway, and so I did. Now Durelle is sitting right across the ring in front of where my wife was supposedly sitting ... and Durelle thinks I'm bugging *him*."

Durelle dismisses this version of events with a disdainful shrug. "That's all baloney," he says. "When you fight with Yvon Durelle, you haven't got time to wave. No one ever waved at Yvon Durelle during a fight unless he was waving goodbye to go home."

Whatever the reason, it quickly became apparent in the sixth round that the momentum had turned against The Fighting Fisherman. Moore's strength had miraculously returned, even as the younger Durelle's drained. The challenger's lackadaisical training habits were now going to cost him.

In the 10th, the pride of l'Acadie was dropped by a brutal left hook, and it became obvious that he was a spent force. The 11th belonged to Moore. He pummeled the all-but-helpless Durelle at will and finally floored him with another hook. The rugged fisherman struggled bravely to his feet, only to be finished by a lightning flurry of lefts and rights. For Durelle, the dream was over.

"As the fight progressed," relates Moore, "I gathered my senses, and when it was over, I knew it had been a great fight. I never get tired of watching that fight."

Durelle shares Moore's enthusiasm for the drama of the fight, if not its eventual outcome.

"I remember every damn punch I threw in that fight, even ones that missed," he says. "I don't even have to look at the film. They forgot about a lot of championship fights after a few years, but everyone still remembers that fight. But I wish I could have won the world championship for my country."

Today, the combatants, who engaged in a 1959 rematch, won by Moore in three rounds, seem like former comrades-in-arms who have fought a common battle. In a real sense, that is true. They both fought and won the battle for respect.

"Yvon Durelle was one of the fights that keeps my name alive," says Moore. "He was a great warrior, and I loved to fight men who *could* fight. He was game to the very end."

Just how tough an opponent was Durelle? The man who should know intimately places him in some very select company. "When I fought Rocky Marciano," says Moore, "he struck me with a combination of punches to put me down. But Durelle knocked me down with one punch—every time he knocked me down with a single punch. So I would have to say that Durelle was the harder puncher."

A boxer's retirement seldom brings pipe-and-slipper tranquility. More often it signals a rapid slide to oblivion. Fortunately, both Moore and Durelle are exceptions to that sad ring maxim. The beauty of it all is that almost 40 years after one of the greatest fights in the history of the Sweet Science, they can exchange memories instead of punches. ■

Jim Prime is a freelance writer and author based in New Minas, Nova Scotia.

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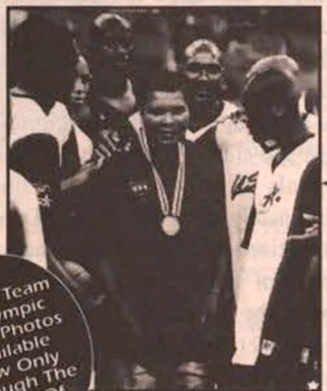

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Boxing Collector's Notebook

By Don Scott

For fight fans, and especially collectors, the 75th anniversary of The Ring, celebrated on March 7, 8, and 9 at Bally's Park Place in Atlantic City, was a great weekend of events. From the memorabilia show and the live auction to the cocktail party and awards banquet, the get-together produced memories that will last a long time.

The memorabilia show included about 30 tables. Joey Maxim, Larry Holmes, and Jake LaMotta were not only guests, but participants; each had a table of their own. The other 30 or so champions appeared in shifts at the autograph tables. As is the case at most card shows, the fighters signed for a fee.

At one point, sensing a slowdown in T-shirt and hat sales, and in a pique of shameless hucksterism, Holmes manned his own table and did his best imitation of a snake oil salesman. The hats sold out almost immediately. It was not the high point of the weekend.

It was good seeing fighters who rarely attend memorabilia shows, such as Ingemar Johansson and Eder Jofre, signing material. Among the other champs who signed were Gene Fullmer, Joe Frazier, Beau Jack, Iran Barkley, Kid Gavilan, Sandy Saddler.

The most interesting event for collectors was Saturday afternoon's memorabilia auction. The Ring had sent out catalogs to all of its subscribers. The magazine also obtained the mailing list of the folks running the auction, Bill Mastro, Don Steinbach, and Craig Hamilton, and had the catalog sent to all the subscribers of my publication, *Boxing Collectors' News*. Distribution was the widest ever for an auction of its kind.

Both the variety and quality of the material was remarkable. There was a large number of extremely rare display pieces, including framed art, posters, signed items, and equipment. There was also a variety of rare boxing cards.

Some of the items and selling prices: a signed photo of Bob Fitzsimmons—$2,800; a ticket to the Corbett-Sullivan fight—$3,000; Patterson-Bonavena poster—$450; Ambers-Armstrong, one sheet—$800; Tiger-Torres one-sheet poster—$400; Louis-Godoy, three sheets—$1,500; Zivic-Armstrong, three sheets—$850; Mike Tyson trunks—$4,800; Roberto Duran robe—$2,200; Rocky Marciano training gloves—$2,750; Joe Louis trunks—$7,500; Rocky Marciano amateur championship belt—$25,000; Joe Louis Golden Gloves trophy—$14,500.

There were also lots of items in the $200-$500 range, including lesser posters, some autographed material, and boxing cards.

If you're sitting at home with similar material and dollar signs are flashing in your head, just remember that this was an extremely well-publicized auction, handled by some of the best in the business. Most of the prices will be hard to match.

I cannot close without commenting on the professional way the entire weekend was handled. The cocktail party and banquet were presented with flash and substance, and the awards ceremony was excellent. By the way, the banquet stage was decorated with large reproductions of back-issue covers of The Ring. Signed by a variety of champions at the end of the proceedings, the posters sold for $500 apiece, with the money donated to the International Boxing Hall of Fame. Expect these posters to pop up at collectibles shows from time to time. And be sure they'll sell for a lot more than $500. Such is the nature of the business.

Here's to 75 more years for "The Bible Of Boxing." ■

Don Scott is editor and publisher of ***Boxing Collectors' News*** *and may be contacted through* The Ring.

WORLDWIDE RATINGS

The ratings of the three major governing bodies recognized by The Ring are supplied by the organizations themselves. They are updated on these pages as soon as they are made available to us. In this issue, the WBA ratings were compiled as of January 1997, the WBC as of February 1997, and the IBF as of March 1997.

HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Lennox Lewis (GB)	**C**	**10**	**–**
Evander Holyfield (USA)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Michael Moorer (USA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Henry Akinwande (GB)	1	–	–
Zeljko Mavrovic (CROA)	2	9	9
Orlin Norris (USA)	3	4	–
David Tua (NZ)	4	–	7
Andrew Golota (POL)	5	7	–
Ray Mercer (USA)	6	–	8
Oliver McCall (USA)	7	1	–
Tony Tucker (USA)	8	5	10
Corrie Sanders (SA)	9	–	3
John Ruiz (USA)	10	–	–
Mike Tyson (USA)	–	2	2
Francois Botha (SA)	–	3	4
Vaughn Bean (USA)	–	6	5
Bruce Seldon (USA)	–	8	–
Not Rated	–	–	1
Obed Sullivan (USA)	18	–	6

CRUISERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Marcelo Dominguez (ARG)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Nate Miller (USA)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Adolpho Washington (USA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)	1	–	–
Akim Tafer (FRA)	2	7	–
Torsten May (GER)	3	9	6
Robert Daniels (USA)	4	3	–
Johnny Nelson (GB)	5	–	–
Terry Dunstan (GB)	6	5	10
Juan Carlos Gomez (CUBA)	7	4	12
Jacob Mofokeng (SA)	8	–	3
Chris Okoh (GB)	9	–	11
David Izeqwire (NIG)	10	12	9
Alexander Gurov (UKR)	–	1	–
Ezequiel Paixao (BRA)	–	2	–
Uriah Grant (USA)	27	6	1
Rick Lamontagne (USA)	–	8	–
Ken Murphy (USA)	–	10	5
Vacant	–	–	2
Arthur Williams (USA)	–	–	4
Faustino Gonzalez (COL)	–	–	7
Imamu Mayfield (USA)	25	–	8

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Roy Jones (USA)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Virgil Hill (USA)	**–**	**C**	**C**
William Guthrie (USA)	1	2	1
Michael Nunn (USA)	2	5	–
Eddy Smulders (HOLL)	3	1	6
Montell Griffin (USA)	4	–	–
Graciano Rocchigiani (GER)	5	–	5
Crawford Ashley (GB)	6	–	4
Merqui Sosa (DR)	7	8	–
Muhammad Siluvangi (ZAI)	8	–	–
Nicky Piper (GB)	9	–	–
Richard Frazier (USA)	10	11	10
Lou Del Valle (USA)	–	3	3
Leif Keiski (SWE)	–	4	–
Tony Byrd (USA)	–	6	–
Dario Matteoni (ARG)	20	7	–
Darrin Allen (USA)	27	9	2
Mike McCallum (USA)	18	10	–
Ray Berry (USA)	28	–	7
Frank Tate (USA)	–	–	8
John Scully (USA)	–	–	9

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Robin Reid (GB)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Frank Liles (USA)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Vacant	**–**	**–**	**C**
Henry Wharton (GB)	1	2	3
Thulane Malinga (SA)	2	–	–
Jorge Castro (ARG)	3	–	–
Vincenzo Nardiello (ITA)	4	–	9
Andrei Shkalikov (RUS)	5	8	11
Joe Calzaghe (GB)	6	–	5
Zafarou Ballogou (TOGO)	7	6	4
Chris Johnson (CAN)	8	11	–
Joseph Kiwanuka (UGA)	9	10	–
Gary Ballard (SA)	10	3	2
Frederic Seillier (FRA)	–	1	10
Mauricio Amaral (BRA)	15	4	6
Tim Littles (USA)	–	5	–
Mike Makata (NZ)	–	7	–
Charles Brewer (USA)	14	9	1
Tony Byrd (USA)	29	–	7
Bryant Brannon (USA)	–	–	8

MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Keith Holmes (USA)	**C**	**–**	**–**
William Joppy (USA)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Bernard Hopkins (USA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Quincy Taylor (USA)	1	–	–
Hassine Cherifi (FRA)	2	10	6
Stephane Ouelette (CAN)	3	–	–
Robert McCracken (GB)	4	–	3
Julian Jackson (USA)	5	6	–
John David Jackson (USA)	6	–	2
Richie Woodhall (GB)	7	–	–
Kevin Palmer (USA)	8	–	–
Paul Vaden (USA)	9	3	5
Brian Barbosa (USA)	10	7	7
Peter Venancio (BRA)	12	1	–
Darren Obah (AUSTRL)	–	2	–
Otis Grant (CAN)	–	4	11
Glen Johnson (USA)	13	5	8
Anthony Stephens (USA)	–	8	–
Anthony Andrews (GUY)	25	9	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Lloyd Bryan (USA)	–	–	4
Andrew Council (USA)	–	12	9
Rogerio Cacciatore (BRA)	24	–	10

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Terry Norris (USA)	**C**	**–**	**C**
Laurent Boudouani (FRA)	**–**	**C**	**–**
David Ciarlante (ITA)	1	9	–
Raul Marquez (USA)	2	5	1
Troy Waters (AUSTRL)	3	–	–
Julio Cesar Vasquez (ARG)	4	7	12
Faouzi Hattab (FRA)	5	–	–
Said Bennajem (FRA)	6	–	–
Ernie Artango (AUSTRL)	7	–	–
Carl Daniels (USA)	8	1	2
Javier Castillejo (SPA)	9	6	–
Ahmed Dottuev (BALK)	10	–	–
Guillermo Jones (PAN)	13	2	4
Robert McCracken (GB)	–	3	–
Giovanni Pretorious (SA)	–	4	–
Alejandro Ugueto (VEN)	–	8	–
Tony Menefee (USA)	–	10	–
Anthony Stephens (USA)	12	–	3
Steve Foster (GB)	–	–	5
Mark Breland (USA)	–	–	6
Don Stokes (USA)	–	–	7
Adrian Dodson (GB)	21	–	8
Rossman Henry (COL)	–	–	9
Jairo Siris (COL)	–	–	10

WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Pernell Whitaker (USA)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Ike Quartey (GHA)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Felix Trinidad (PR)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Patrick Charpentier (FRA)	1	2	1
Derrell Coley (USA)	2	5	8
Wilfredo Rivera (PR)	3	10	–
Andrei Pestryaev (RUS)	4	1	–
Ariel Chaves (ARG)	5	–	–
Robert West (USA)	6	–	–
Diobelys Hurtado (CUBA)	7	–	–
Suk Hyun Yun (KOR)	8	–	–
Tony Martin (USA)	9	9	4
Maxim Nesterenko (RUS)	10	–	–
Sean Sullivan (NZ)	20	3	–
Oba Carr (USA)	–	4	10
Andrew Murray (GUY)	–	6	7
Jeff Malcolm (AUSTRL)	–	7	–
Romallis Ellis (USA)	–	8	–
Vincent Pettway (USA)	–	–	2
Hitonon Sato (JAP)	–	–	3
Mahenge Zulu (ZAI)	–	–	5
Hugo Pineda (COL)	–	–	6
Juan Negron (PR)	–	11	9

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Oscar De La Hoya (USA)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Khalid Rahilou (FRA)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)	**–**	**–**	**C**

Julio Cesar Chavez (MEX)	1	1	–
Miguel Angel Gonzalez (MEX)	2	2	–
Ismael Chaves (ARG)	3	–	–
Rafael Ruelas (MEX)	4	–	11
Soren Sondergaard (DEN)	5	8	3
Charles Murray (USA)	6	6	7
Frankie Randall (USA)	7	5	–
Sharmba Mitchell (USA)	8	4	2
Walter Crucce (ARG)	9	–	–
Jong Hoon Yuh (KOR)	10	–	–
Jose Barbosa (VEN)	–	3	–
Viacheslav Yanovsky (KAZ)	–	7	–
Virgil McClendon (USA)	–	9	5
Biuo Arai (JAP)	–	10	–
Freddie Pendleton (USA)	–	–	1
Jemal Corbin (USA)	–	–	4
Jat Bergman (SA)	–	–	6
Vernon Forrest (USA)	25	–	8
Nicolas Cervera (COL)	11	–	9
Jose Cordoba (PAN)	–	–	10

LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Jean-Baptiste Mendy (FRA)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Orzubek Nazarov (JAP)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Phillip Holiday (SA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Steve Johnston (USA)	1	5	–
Cesar Bazan (MEX)	2	–	–
Manuel Fernandez (FRA)	3	–	–
Hiroyuki Sakamoto (JAP)	4	6	12
Louvander Johnson (USA)	5	–	–
Alberto Sicurella (ARG)	6	3	–
Billy Irwin (CAN)	7	7	–
Jong Kwon Baek (KOR)	8	–	–
Jimmy Rangel (COL)	9	–	–
Daonai Sithkodam (THAI)	10	–	–
Louvander Johnson (USA)	–	1	3
Angel Mona (FRA)	14	2	–
Carlos Fernandez (PORT)	–	4	–
Ivan Robinson (USA)	–	8	4
Samir Cherrad (FRA)	23	9	–
Billy Schwer (GB)	21	10	9
Demetrius Ceballos (USA)	30	–	1
Eduardo Morales (ARG)	18	11	2
Shane Mosley (USA)	12	–	5
Justin Rowsell (AUSTRL)	–	–	6
Luis Flores (COL)	–	–	7
Fred Ladd (USA)	–	–	8
Miguel Julio (COL)	–	–	10

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Azumah Nelson (GHA)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Yong Soo Choi (KOR)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Arturo Gatti (USA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Anatoly Alexandrov (RUS)	1	2	9
Gabriel Ruelas (USA)	2	–	–
Robert Garcia (USA)	3	6	1
Genaro Hernandez (USA)	4	7	–
Djamel Lifa (FRA)	5	8	8
Takanori Hatakeyama (JAP)	6	–	10
Douglas Villarreal (COL)	7	9	–
Hector Lizarraga (USA)	8	–	–
Jorge Paez (MEX)	9	–	–
Justin Jouko (UGA)	10	–	–
Lakva Sim (MON)	–	1	–
Gilbert Serrano (VEN)	–	3	–
Carlos Gerena (PR)	–	4	–
Julien Lorcy (FRA)	–	5	11
Edson Xuxa Nacimento (BRA)	–	10	–
Jaime Rangel (COL)	–	–	2
Harold Warren (USA)	19	–	3
Tom Johnson (USA)	–	–	4
Tracy Patterson (USA)	–	–	5
Cliff Samardin (AUSTRL)	–	–	6
Ramon Ledon (CUBA)	–	–	7

FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Luisito Espinosa (PHIL)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Wilfredo Vazquez (PR)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Naseem Hamed (GB)	**11**	**–**	**C**
Carlos Rios (ARG)	1	2	9
Cesar Soto (MEX)	2	–	–
Billy Hardy (GB)	3	11	4
Ever Beleno (COL)	4	9	5
Alejandro Gonzalez (MEX)	5	–	–
Mehdi Labdouni (FRA)	6	–	–
Frederic Perez (FRA)	7	10	–
Manuel Medina (MEX)	8	–	–
Koji Matsumoto (JAP)	9	–	–
November Ntshingila (AUSTRL)	10	–	6
Yuji Watanabe (JAP)	–	1	–
Victor Polo (COL)	–	3	7
Rafael Meran (DR)	–	4	–
Angel Vasquez (PR)	29	5	–
Fred Norwood (USA)	–	6	–
Tony Wehbe (INDO)	–	7	–
Roque Cassiani (COL)	–	8	–
Hector Lizarraga (USA)	–	–	1
Welcome Ncita (SA)	–	–	2
Jose Badillo (PR)	–	–	3
Carlos Gerena (PR)	–	–	8
Arnulfo Castillo (USA)	–	–	10

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Daniel Zaragoza (MEX)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Antonio Cermeno (VEN)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Vuyani Bungu (SA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Erik Morales (MEX)	1	2	–
Joichiro Tatsuyoshi (JAP)	2	–	–
Wayne McCullough (IRE)	3	–	–
Hector Acero-Sanchez (DR)	4	–	–
Marco Antonio Barrera (MEX)	5	–	–
Martin Krastev (BUL)	6	5	7
Enrique Sanchez (MEX)	7	7	12
Enrique Jupiter (MEX)	8	–	–
Reynante Jamili (PHIL)	9	–	–
Jesus Salud (USA)	10	–	–
Rafael Del Valle (PR)	–	1	–
Kennedy McKinney (USA)	–	3	–
Yober Ortega (VEN)	–	4	–
Yuichi Kasai (JAP)	–	6	–
Serge Poilbian (FRA)	19	8	–
Enrique Angeles (MEX)	–	9	–
Bugiarso (INDO)	–	10	–
Anell Barotillo (AUSTRL)	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Kennedy McKinney (USA)	22	–	3
Victor Llerena (COL)	–	–	4
Vincent Belcastro (ITA)	–	–	5
Nurhuda (INDO)	–	–	6
Harold Mestre (COL)	14	–	8
Angel Chacon (PR)	21	–	9
Rey Jamili (PHIL)	–	–	10

BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Siromongkol Singmanasuk (THAI)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Daorung C. Siriwat (THAI)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Mbulelo Botile (SA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Victor Rabanales (MEX)	1	–	–
Pastor Maurin (ARG)	2	8	–
Paul Ayala (USA)	3	6	–
In Jin Chi (KOR)	4	–	–
Dario Azuaga (PAR)	5	–	6
Jorge Monsalvo (COL)	6	–	–
Setsuo Kawamasu (JAP)	7	9	–
Gerardo Martinez (MEX)	8	11	–
Shaszi Nitta (JAP)	9	–	7
Javier Campanario (SPA)	10	–	–
Abraham Torres (VEN)	–	1	–
Lukhin CP Gym (THAI)	–	2	–
Yong Hoon Lee (KOR)	–	3	–
Nana Konadu (GHA)	–	4	–
Angel Chacon (PR)	–	5	–
Tim Austin (USA)	17	7	1
Joichiro Tatsuyoshi (JAP)	–	10	–
Adrian Kaspari (INDO)	22	–	2
Jesus Perez (COL)	19	–	3
Rafael Del Valle (PR)	–	–	4
Wilson Alcorro (COL)	–	–	5
Adan Vargas (MEX)	11	–	8
Fernando Montilla (PHIL)	–	–	9
Ancee Gedeon (USA)	–	–	10

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Gerry Penalosa (PHIL)	**C**	**5**	**–**
Yokthai Sithoar (THAI)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Danny Romero (USA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Joel Luna Zarate (MEX)	1	7	–
Hiroshi Kawashima (JAP)	2	–	–
Luis Bolanos (COL)	3	10	–
Jose Rafael Sosa (ARG)	4	–	–
Luis Benavides (COL)	5	12	9
Veeraphol Sahaprom (THAI)	6	3	–
Evangelio Perez (PAN)	7	–	–
In Joo Cho (KOR)	8	–	–
Jaji Sibali (SA)	9	–	7
Raffy Montalban (PHIL)	10	–	–
Aquiles Guzman (VEN)	–	1	–
Dario Azuaga (PAR)	–	2	–
Alimi Goitia (VEN)	–	4	–
Jesus Rojas (VEN)	–	6	–
Satoshi Iida (JAP)	–	8	8
Andy Agosto (PR)	13	9	4
Not Rated	–	–	1
Ubadel Soto (COL)	–	–	2
Ratanachai Sor Voraphin (THAI)	21	–	3
Sombak Singchawan (THAI)	–	–	5
Juvenal Berrio (COL)	–	–	6
Wilfredo Vargas (PR)	–	–	10

FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Yuri Arbachakov (RUS)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Jose Bonilla (VEN)	**23**	**C**	**–**
Mark Johnson (USA)	**12**	**–**	**C**
Isaias Zamudio (USA)	1	3	9
Chatchai Sasakul (THAI)	2	–	1
Gabriel Mira (MEX)	3	–	–
Yong Soon Chang (KOR)	4	8	–
Chokchai Chokviwat (THAI)	5	–	–
Keiji Yamaguchi (JAP)	6	–	–
Jesper Jensen (DEN)	7	5	8
Salvatore Fanni (ITA)	8	11	–
Peter Culshaw (GB)	9	4	–
Paul Weir (GB)	10	–	–
Evangelino Perez (PAN)	–	1	2
Saen Sow Ploenchit (THAI)	13	2	–
Hiroki Ioka (JAP)	–	6	–
Takashi Ohba (JAP)	29	7	–
Alejandro Montiel (MEX)	–	9	–
Leo Gamez (VEN)	–	10	–
Ferid Ben Jeddou (TUN)	–	–	3
Ilido Julio (COL)	26	–	4
Irene Pacheco (COL)	–	–	5
Yodchingchai Sornthong (THAI)	–	–	6
Will Grigsby (USA)	–	–	7
Vuyani Nene (SA)	–	–	10

JR. FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Saman Sorjaturong (THAI)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Pichitnoi C. Siriwat (THAI)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Mauricio Pastrana (COL)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Ladislao Vazquez (MEX)	1	–	–
Yosam Choi (KOR)	2	9	–
Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)	3	–	11
Manuel Jesus Herrera (DR)	4	8	6
Michael Carbajal (USA)	5	–	–
Shiro Yahiro (JAP)	6	–	–
Kaaj Chartbandi (THAI)	7	–	–
Phanieng Sasiprabha (THAI)	8	10	–
Takashi Shiohama (JAP)	9	–	7
Ramon Euroza (MEX)	10	–	–
Hadao C.P. Gym (THAI)	–	1	–
Michael Carbajal (USA)	–	2	5
Sinn Ploenchit (THAI)	–	3	–
Yong Jin Kim (KOR)	19	4	–
Suzuki Kabato (JAP)	–	5	–
Keiji Yamaguchi (JAP)	–	6	–
Carlos Murillo (PAN)	–	7	2
Anis Roga (INDO)	–	–	1
Onewin Chareon (THAI)	–	–	3
Nelson Dieppa (PR)	–	–	4
Jesus Chong (MEX)	–	–	8
Juan Cordoba (ARG)	–	–	9
Eric Griffin (USA)	17	–	10

STRAWWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Ricardo Lopez (MEX)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Rosendo Alvarez (NIC)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Ratanapol Sow Voraphin (THAI)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Rocky Lin (JAP)	1	1	–
Sinn Sow Ploenchit (THAI)	2	–	–
Ala Villamor (PHIL)	3	–	7
Andy Tabanas (PHIL)	4	7	2
Morgan Ndumo (SA)	5	–	–
Payak Nakornluang (THAI)	6	10	–
Lindi Memani (SA)	7	–	–
Carmelo Caceres (PHIL)	8	–	–
Sang Chul Lee (KOR)	9	–	–
Mongol Charoen (THAI)	10	–	4
Jose Garcia (COL)	–	2	–
Kwanjai Battery (THAI)	–	3	–
Chana Porpaoin (THAI)	–	4	–
Sung Tae Lim (KOR)	–	5	–
Songkram Porpaoin (THAI)	–	6	–
Fah Sung Ponasawang (THAI)	–	8	–
Pongsaklek Sithanonsak (THAI)	30	9	–
Juan Herrera (COL)	11	–	1
Osvaldo Guerrero (MEX)	–	–	3
Wondee Charoen (THAI)	–	–	5
Luis Doria (COL)	–	–	6
Wellington Vicente (BRA)	–	–	8
Kermin Guardia (COL)	–	–	9
Keitaro Hoshino (JAP)	22	–	10

RING CLASSIC

MICHAEL SPINKS NOW STANDS TALLEST AMONG LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS

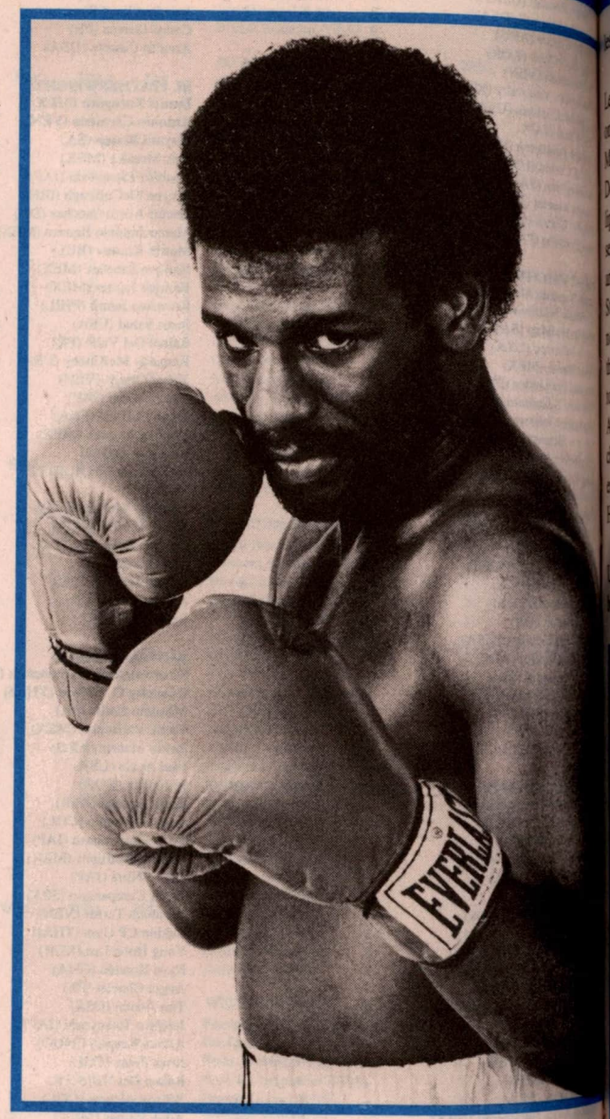
By Randy Gordon

"The road is long ... But I'm strong enough to carry him ... He ain't heavy, he's my brother."

—The Hollies

Michael Spinks resignedly rose from the couch, walked slowly over to the television, and switched it off. He could have just as easily reached next to him, picked up the remote control box in his big right hand, and pressed a button to turn off the set. However, Spinks wanted to get up. He hoped the reporter wouldn't see his face. He was crying.

It was Sunday, March 6. Spinks was 12 days away from a title unification fight against Dwight Braxton. However, on this day, his mind wasn't on Braxton. It was on his big brother, Leon, the former heavyweight champion of the world. Leon was fighting Carlos DeLeon, the former WBC cruiserweight champion, a fight Michael had pleaded with his brother to pull out of.



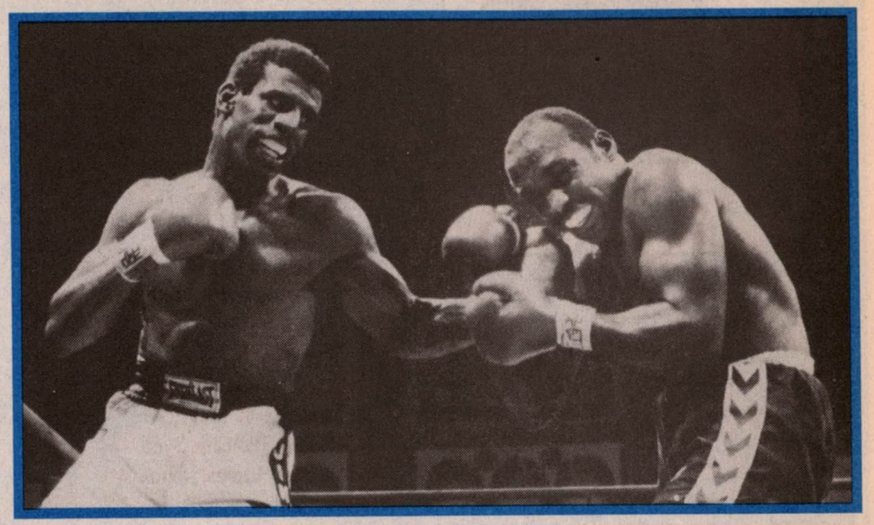
"I didn't like the way the whole thing smelled from the beginning," said the younger, more successful Spinks. "Don King was out to use my brother's name, nothing more. But my brother has always done things the way he wanted to do them. When he sets his mind to do something, that's it—whether it's right or wrong. He set his mind to fight for King. And to fight DeLeon. No matter how I tried, I couldn't change his mind. I knew it was wrong and Leon knew it was wrong. But his mind was made up. He took the fight."

Leon fought DeLeon the way he had fought 17 other professional fights—with animal ferocity, sheer guts, and an unbelievable disregard for himself. Whenever DeLeon threw a punch in the direction of the former champion, Spinks blocked it. With his chin. With his face. With any part of his head. After the second round, any beginning student of boxing could see who the fight belonged to.

In the fifth round, DeLeon was hitting Spinks hard. And often. Yet it was brother Michael who moaned and groaned whenever a punch landed, not Leon. Early in the contest, Michael leaned when his brother leaned. When DeLeon was backed against the ropes in the opening round, Leon threw short, powerful hooks and uppercuts, punches that surely would have felled DeLeon had they landed. But the punches bounced harmlessly off DeLeon.

It became apparent rather quickly that Leon's night—and possibly his career—was only a matter of minutes from being over. Michael slumped on the couch as he watched DeLeon beat on his brother, shredding his lips and pounding his right eye shut. He had seen Leon get beaten before—as a pro, as an amateur, and back in the Pruitt Igoe ghetto in St. Louis, where their dreams began. But never had he seen him so thoroughly thrashed. Nobody knew the inner pain and torment Leon was feeling when referee Arthur Mercante walked over to his corner, checked his condition, then waved his arms, ending the fight. Nobody except Michael. His tears were understandable.

It had been almost seven years since the United States had assembled what may have been the greatest team of amateurs ever to compete in the Olympic Games. Making it to the quarterfinals were welterweight Clint Jackson and featherweight Davey Armstrong. To the semifinals bantamweight Charles Mooney. And to the victory stand to receive gold medals flyweight Leo Randolph, lightweight Howard Davis Jr., light welterweight Sugar Ray Leonard, middleweight Michael Spinks, and light heavyweight Leon Spinks.



In the biggest fight of his career, Spinks unified the light heavyweight title by outboxing Dwight Muhammad Qawi over 15 rounds in Atlantic City. The victory established the 26-year-old Spinks as one of the best fighters, pound-for-pound, in the world.

Spinks' first big test was a showdown vs. former world champion Marvin Johnson in March 1981. After being battered for three rounds, Spinks crushed the southpaw with a single punch in the fourth.

Soon after the Olympics had ended, each of the medalists, with the exception of Mooney, announced his intention to turn pro. Leon's debut came on January 15, 1977. By the time Michael came out on April 17, his brother was already 3-0 and, unbeknownst to the world, just 10 months away from pulling off one of the greatest upsets in boxing history—a 15-round split decision victory over heavyweight king Muhammad Ali. In the year's remaining eight months, Michael pounded his way to five more victories. During the same time, Leon won four more fights, upping his record to 7-0. The Spinks brothers were in competition with each other, having fun every punch of the way.

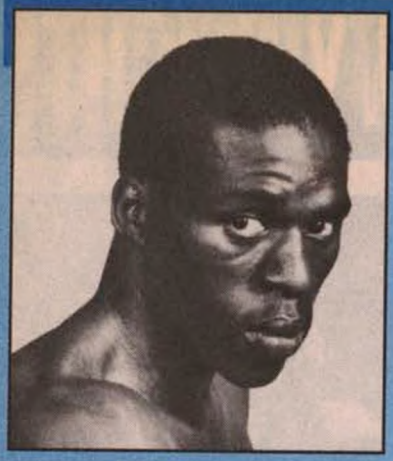
Then came February 15, 1978. Michael fought Tom Bethea, decisioning him over eight rounds. Sitting ringside and rooting him on was big brother Leon. Following Michael's victory, Leon went back to his own dressing room, where he got warmed up to beat up Muhammad Ali. Leon has never been the same since.

"It all came too quickly," says Michael. "Winning the Olympics was one thing. We were a team. We had each other. But when Leon beat Ali, I mean, that was one of the greatest sports stories in history. A guy with but seven fights beating the great Ali. The next day, you couldn't pick up a newspaper or turn on a radio or TV without seeing or hearing something about Leon Spinks.

"Leon didn't care much for the money, believe it or not. He knew it would be there. What he wanted more than anything else was

From THE RING, May 1983

THE RING RATINGS, *May 1983*



Roger Mayweather

HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Larry Holmes**, Easton, PA
1. **Michael Dokes***, Akron, OH
2. **Mike Weaver**, Los Angeles, CA
3. **Renaldo Snipes**, Yonkers, NY
4. **Gerrie Coetzee**, South Africa
5. **Pinklon Thomas**, Philadelphia, PA
6. **Trevor Berbick**, Halifax, Canada
7. **Greg Page**, Louisville, KY
8. **Gerry Cooney**, Huntington, NY
9. **Randall (Tex) Cobb**, Philadelphia, PA
10. **Tim Witherspoon**, Philadelphia, PA

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Michael Spinks, St. Louis, MO
1. **Dwight Braxton**, Camden, NJ
2. **Eddie Mustafa Muhammad**, Brooklyn, NY
3. **Matthew Saad Muhammad**, Philadelphia, PA
4. **Eddie Davis**, Freeport, NY
5. **Carlos DeLeon**, Puerto Rico
6. **John Davis**, Hempstead, NY
7. **Marvin Johnson**, Indianapolis, IN
8. **Oscar Rivadeneyra**, Vineland, NJ
9. **John Odhiambo**, Denmark
10. **Jose M. Flores**, Uruguay

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: Marvin Hagler, Brockton, MA
1. **Wilford Scypion**, Port Arthur, TX
2. **Frank Fletcher**, Philadelphia, PA
3. **Tony Sibson**, England
4. **Mustafa Hamsho**, Syria
5. **Thomas Hearns**, Detroit, MI
6. **Dwight Davison**, Detroit, MI
7. **James Shuler**, Philadelphia, PA
8. **Fulgencio Obelmejias**, Venezuela
9. **James Green**, Irvington, NJ
10. **Bobby Czyz**, Wanaque, NJ

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: Title Vacant
1. **Thomas Hearns****, Detroit, MI
2. **Wilfred Benitez**, Puerto Rico
3. **Tony Ayala Jr.**, San Antonio, TX
4. **Davey Moore***, New York, NY
5. **Mike McCallum**, Brooklyn, NY
6. **Carlos Herrera**, Argentina
7. **Clint Jackson**, Nashville, TN
8. **James Green**, Irvington, NJ
9. **Roberto Duran**, Panama
10. **Gary Guiden**, Muncie, IN

WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Title Vacant
1. **Milton McCrory**, Detroit, MI
2. **Donald Curry***, Fort Worth, TX
3. **Marlon Starling**, Hartford, CT
4. **Roger Stafford**, Philadelphia, PA
5. **Kevin Howard**, Philadelphia, PA
6. **Colin Jones**, Wales
7. **Bobby Joe Young**, Steubenville, OH
8. **Mauricio Bravo**, Venezuela
9. **Pipino Cuevas**, Mexico
10. **Elio Diaz**, Venezuela

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Aaron Pryor*, Cincinnati, OH
1. **Leroy Haley****, Las Vegas, NV
2. **Alexis Arguello**, Nicaragua
3. **Johnny Bumphus**, Clementon, NJ
4. **Saoul Mamby**, New York, NY
5. **Steve Hearon**, Houston, TX

If brother Leon had been more stable, especially after winning the heavyweight title, Michael might've been crowned years earlier. Instead, he spent much of his time looking after his older brother.

friends. When you're on top, all the way on top like Leon was, even your enemies become your friends. I could see through all of them. Leon couldn't!"

In trying to protect his brother from the sleaze that surrounded and engulfed him, Michael began to sacrifice his own career. Following his brother's ascension to the heavyweight throne, Michael, who had fought seven times in the previous 10 months, remained inactive for the next 10 months. When he returned to action on December 15, 1978, Leon was there, his title now that of ex-champ. And "Neon Leon."

"I intend to stay active from now on," Michael told the press following a fourth-round stoppage of Eddie Phillips. "I'm back, and I hope to be fighting for the light heavyweight title late in 1979."

But it wasn't to be. As it turned out, Michael suffered through his worst year in '79. Instead of pursuing his championship

6. Sang Hyun Kim, South Korea
7. Guillermo Fernandez, Venezuela
8. Ubaldo Sacco, Argentina
9. Billy Costello, Kingston, NY
10. Bruce Curry, Fort Worth, TX

LIGHTWEIGHTS

World Champ: Title Vacant

1. Ray Mancini*, Youngstown, OH
2. Edwin Rosario, Puerto Rico
3. Howard Davis Jr., Glen Cove, NY
4. Andy Ganigan, Honolulu, HI
5. Greg Coverson, Kalamazoo, MI
6. Roberto Elizondo, Corpus Christi, TX
7. Livingstone Bramble, Passaic, NJ
8. Jose Luis Ramirez, Mexico
9. Ken Bogner, Trenton, NJ
10. Orlando Romero, Peru

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS

World Champ: Roger Mayweather*, Las Vegas, NV

1. Cornelius Boza-Edwards, England
2. Hector Camacho, New York, NY
3. Samuel Serrano, Puerto Rico
4. Bobby Chacon**, Pacoima, CA
5. Rafael (Bazooka) Limon, Mexico
6. Johnny De La Rosa, Miami, FL
7. Rolando Navarette, Philippines
8. Jorge Alvarado, Panama
9. Chung Il Choi, South Korea
10. Ruben Munoz, Dallas, TX

FEATHERWEIGHTS

World Champ: Eusebio Pedroza*, Panama

1. Juan LaPorte**, New York, NY
2. Wilfredo Gomez, Puerto Rico
3. Rocky Lockridge, Paterson, NJ
4. Jose Caba, Dominican Republic
5. Azumah Nelson, Ghana
6. Ruben Castillo, Bakersfield, CA
7. Mario Miranda, Colombia
8. Marcos Villasana, Mexico
9. Jackie Beard, Detroit, MI
10. Bernard Taylor, Knoxville, TN

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

World Champ: Wilfredo Gomez**, Puerto Rico

1. Leo Cruz*, Dominican Republic
2. Jaime Garza, Los Angeles, CA
3. Sergio Palma, Argentina
4. Mike Ayala, New York, NY
5. Lupe Pintor, Mexico
6. Felipe Orozco, Colombia
7. Soon Hyun Chung, South Korea
8. Felix Rodriguez, Panama
9. Juan (Kid) Meza, Los Angeles, CA
10. Bobby Berna, Philippines

BANTAMWEIGHTS

World Champ: Jeff Chandler*, Philadelphia, PA

1. Lupe Pintor**, Mexico
2. Albert Davila, Los Angeles, CA
3. Oscar Muniz, Los Angeles, CA
4. Jiro Watanabe, Japan
5. Rafael Orono, Venezuela
6. Edgar Roman, Venezuela
7. Gaby Canizales, Laredo, TX
8. Chul Ho Kim, South Korea
9. Harold Petty, Fort Worth, TX
10. Freddie Jackson, Houston, TX

FLYWEIGHTS

World Champ: Charlie Magri**, England

1. Santos Laciar*, Argentina
2. Hilario Zapata, Panama
3. Freddy Castillo, Mexico
4. Eleoncio Mercedes, Dominican Republic
5. Prudencio Cardona, Colombia
6. Katsuo Tokashiki, Japan
7. German Torres, Mexico
8. Antonio Avelar, Mexico
9. Hwan Jin Kim, South Korea
10. Jung Koo Chang, South Korea

dreams, Michael was constantly pursuing his brother, attempting to rescue Leon from his friends, and from himself.

The Spinks brothers fought only once each during that year. The combined total of rounds was less than two. On June 24, Leon, inactive since his rematch loss to Ali, journeyed to Monte Carlo to face Gerrie Coetzee, he of the Bionic Hand. There, in front of a small nighttime gathering and an international television audience, Leon was floored three times in the first round and stopped for the first time in his career. Afterward, in the dressing room, a disconsolate Leon could only shout at his mother, who was hollering at him, trying mightily to find an excuse for his dismal performance. "Leave me alone, Mama. I just lost—that's all!" Exactly five months later, using his right hand, which he had come to affectionately call "The Spinks Jinx," Michael stopped Marc Hans in the same round his brother had fallen in—the

In his second defense of the WBA title, Spinks stopped Mustafa Wassaja in the sixth round. The champion is often unorthodox, but when he connects with his "Spinks Jinx" right hand, his opponents all fall down. In 19 fights at this point, he had registered 13 knockouts.

first. And that was it in '79 for the brothers Spinks.

On January 12, 1980, after seven months of inactivity, Leon returned to action, his career in much the same shape as his private life—in shambles. His opponent was Alfredo Evangelista, a journeyman who decided to take his paycheck and go home in the fifth round, but not before rocking Leon's knees in the second with an overhand right.

Michael had planned to be at ringside for his brother, just as Leon had been for so many of his fights. However, when he went to his mother's room to fetch her for the fight, scheduled to start within 10 minutes at the ballroom downstairs in the Atlantic City casino, Mama Spinks greeted him with, "Michael, let's pray." The two joined hands and fell to their knees. Locked in prayer, they took more time than either realized. Finally, reminding his mother of their equally as sacred mission to be in Leon's corner, Michael steered her to the door. As they left the room, a maid who recognized the two as members of the fighter's party greeted them with a hearty congratulations. Michael and his mom could only look at each other, unable to fathom why they were being congratulated for merely exiting a room. "The fight's over," said the maid. "Your brother Leon won in the fifth round," she said, addressing Michael.

It was that kind of a year for the Spinks clan. One had to wonder if it could get better; it could hardly get worse.

For Leon, 1980 was a good year. For Michael, it was vintage. Besides beating Evangelista, Leon drew with Eddie Lopez in March, then knocked out Kevin Isaac two months later. On the undercard of Larry Holmes-Ali in October, Spinks stopped hard-hitting Bernardo Mercado in a battle of "Which Man Can Break More Training Rules."

Michael had five bouts during the year, winning them all. More importantly, he took on the look of a world-class fighter. By the end of the year, Michael had the light heavyweight title in his sights. In January 1981, he was impressive in stopping tough Willie Taylor. Only one man now stood in his way of a title fight against WBA kingpin Eddie Mustafa Muhammad. That was two-time former light heavyweight champion Marvin Johnson, a fast-starting, hard-hitting southpaw. On March 28, Spinks met Johnson in a fight to determine who would fight Mustafa Muhammad for the championship. Spinks won the honor—and the fight—by halting Johnson with a vicious left hand in the fourth round. The punch, a cross between a left hook and uppercut, did more than stop Johnson. It knocked him O-U-T!

On July 18, 1981, Michael finally got his chance. Seated at ringside in Vegas was Leon, who one month earlier had been given a shot at Larry Holmes' world heavyweight title. It had been a dismal evening for Leon. A short, dismal evening. Holmes stopped him in the third round.

Again defending in Atlantic City, Spinks overwhelmed tough Scot Murray Sutherland in eight rounds. One year earlier, Matthew Saad Muhammad had struggled before halting Sutherland in nine.

Against Mustafa Muhammad, Spinks fought cautiously for the first seven rounds, respectful of the Brooklynite's one-punch knockout power. Mustafa Muhammad fought the same way, ever careful of the much-ballyhooed Spinks Jinx. At the end of round seven, Spinks threw a jab. The punch found Mustafa's right eye. In the 60-second rest period, Muhammad's eye didn't just swell, it ballooned. Comfortably ahead on all three scorecards, the one-eyed King still had eight rounds to go.

Concentrating on keeping his right hand up and protecting his eye, Muhammad forgot about his left side. The Spinks Jinx found his chin in the 10th round. Down went the champion on his side. To his credit, he arose. But he arose a beaten fighter. For the remainder of the bout he fought defensively, trying to keep Spinks from duplicating the knockdown. After 15 rounds, the ring announcer would once again proclaim that another man named Spinks reigned as world champion.

***

Before beating Braxton on points, Spinks had talked of how proud he was of his rather easy stoppage of Johnny Davis. It had been Davis who had handed Braxton his only loss, by decision in November 1978. Then, while in less than top condition, Davis made Braxton struggle for victory in a January 1981 rematch.

While there is a rapidly growing feeling that Spinks may well become one of the greatest light heavyweights of all-time, Davis has not yet jumped on that bandwagon.

"He's good, no question about it," said Davis. "Real good. But saying he's better than guys like Bob Foster and Archie Moore is a bit premature, don't you think? I still believe Mustafa Muhammad would have outpointed him if Spinks hadn't stuck his thumb in Eddie's eye. If Spinks is great at anything, it's fighting dirty. Watch him when he throws an uppercut. He always looks to land the elbow. Same thing with the hook. The man is all thumbs and elbows. They made thumbless gloves for protection from a guy like Spinks. Now, if they can develop some elbow balloons for him to wear ... "

The allegations of being a dirty fighter bother Spinks, who takes great pride in his boxing and punching ability.

"I don't need to fight dirty to win," said Spinks. "Sure, I've thumbed a few guys. But sometimes it's just the way the punch lands, not because I'm looking to stick a thumb in a man's eye. And about me always trying to land an intentional elbow, that's crazy. If you notice, I always follow through on my punches. Always! Watch me closely from now on. Watch how many times other fighters, frustrated that they can't get close to me, try to thumb me. And butt me. Just watch!"

The allegations also bother Butch Lewis, who has promoted all of Spinks' fights.

"I've watched Michael grow as a fighter," said Lewis. "I've seen him polish his

By the time Spinks stopped Johnny Davis, in September 1982, Dwight (Braxton) Qawi had wrested the WBC title from Matthew Saad Muhammad. That set up a showdown between the champions.

skills to the point where he is unquestionably the best light heavyweight in the world. He's still getting better, still a year or two away from hitting his prime. Michael has no reason, or need, to fight dirty. When you're on top, everybody likes to find reasons to pick on you. That's when you know you've really made it. But Michael is only just getting started. He'll conquer other worlds before he's through."

The "other worlds" are the cruiserweight and heavyweight titles. Spinks' chances of winning the heavyweight crown, something no reigning light heavyweight has been able to do, are not as remote as they may seem when one first thinks about it. At 6'2½", Spinks will be outsized and outreached by very few heavyweights. Also, any light heavyweights who have stepped up to challenge for the biggest prize in sports were splinters in there against the heavyweight champion, as was Bob Foster, who weighed 188 pounds to Joe Frazier's 209 in November 1970. By the time Spinks is ready to go after the heavyweight crown, perhaps in another two years, his natural body weight will be around 190 pounds. Adding 10 pounds for extra strength will present him no problem. And with the power he possesses in both fists, the heavyweight crown may be only a punch or two away.

However, Spinks will be the first to tell you that winning the heavyweight crown is not foremost on his mind. A cruiserweight bout is. Not a cruiserweight title bout, either. Spinks wants former WBC cruiserweight champion Carlos DeLeon, the same man who destroyed brother Leon.

In a rare moment of bitterness, Spinks said, "I'd like to win the cruiserweight title. But first I'd like to take a tuneup fight. I wouldn't mind tuning up on DeLeon's face!"

As the boxing fraternity gathered in Atlantic City for his "Brawl For It All" battle against Braxton, Michael Spinks posed for pictures with two of the light heavyweight division's greats, Bob Foster and Archie Moore.

"If there's any light heavyweight around today who can beat this guy," said Foster, pointing to Spinks, "I haven't seen him."

Moore nodded in agreement.

"Having this guy in your division can make a light heavyweight want to step up and fight heavyweights," stated the Ol' Mongoose. "Most of them aren't as dangerous!" ■

THE RING, May 1983

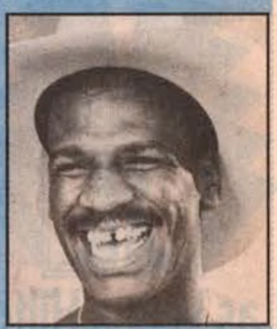
The Cover: Everything's A-okay for light heavyweight titlist Michael Spinks, one of only two undisputed world champions in the game. (Marvin Hagler is the other.) Spinks unified the 175-pound title by outpointing Dwight Braxton in Atlantic City.

Arum Talks: In an exclusive interview with THE RING Assistant Editor Ben Sharav, promoter Bob Arum says, " ... there's one bagman in the WBA, and that's Pepe Cordero. And anytime you want a fix in the WBA, you 'bribe' Cordero and he takes care of it ... To get [Ray] Mancini a title shot, we had to pay Pepe Cordero hundreds of thousands of dollars."

Chillin' With Gil: Few trainers have enjoyed the success of Gil Clancy, who has worked with, among others, Emile Griffith, George Foreman, and Jerry Quarry. In a first-person story, Clancy, a gymnasium purist, outlines his formula for preparing fighters.

The Marvelous Middleweight: In a talk with THE RING, undisputed middleweight champion Marvin Hagler responds to some of the WBC's proposed rule changes. Not surprisingly, Hagler is opposed to the reduction of championship bouts from 15 to 12 rounds. "Shortening the length of the match," he said, "would lessen the importance of stamina for the better-conditioned boxer."

Fighter Of The Month: No surprise here. The selection is Michael Spinks, who bested light heavyweight rival Dwight Braxton in an eagerly anticipated showdown. The battle wasn't particularly exciting, but Spinks followed trainer Eddie Futch's fight plan to perfection.



LOOKING AHEAD

By Steve Farhood

LIGHTING UP THE LIGHT HEAVYS

You want to talk tough? Forget fighting with a fractured jaw or a busted hand. Tough is signing with Don King and then walking out on him. Tough is taking the IBF to court—and winning—to guarantee a title shot. And tough is abandoning a lucrative career as a drug dealer to work for the measly wages of a prizefighter. Actually, that's not tough, that's *smart.*

Light heavyweight contender William Guthrie is a fascinating story; should he make it to the top, he'll be the first titlist in history to have earned more as a teenager on the street than a world champion. Growing up in St. Louis, Guthrie became a drug kingpin. At one point, he owned six homes, including a $7-million mansion, and 10 cars. The flip side: He was shot (five times) and stabbed (three times), and spent three years in prison, including lengthy stretches in solitary confinement because he wouldn't name names. Like we said, tough.

Guthrie: A light heavy to watch

Three days before stopping Jamie Stevenson in Boston, Guthrie told THE RING he was scared straight the day federal marshals escorted him into the Big House. Now the former amateur standout is ready to make his move in the resurgent 175-pound class. With WBC champion Montell Griffin and Roy Jones to be rematched, the unbeaten Guthrie is aiming for a shot at WBA-IBF titlist Virgil Hill. Trouble is, Hill is making millions fighting the likes of Dariusz Michalczewski and Graciano Rocchigiani in Germany.

"He won't fight me," Guthrie says of the champion. "He'll give up the title first."

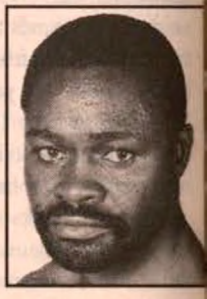
Should Guthrie eventually fight Jones, there'll be a unique angle: Guthrie is trained by Roy Jones Sr., the former world champion's estranged father.

Guthrie is promoted by America Presents. Asked why he left King, he said, "If you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything. All those stories you hear about Don are true. He didn't do right by me."

With the power of his punch and the force of his personality, Guthrie is an intriguing addition to a division that just recently welcomed Jones. "There hasn't been any excitement at light heavyweight in quite some time," Guthrie says. "I bring a great deal. I can box and punch, and I can think."

He proved the latter the day he decided to take a pay cut.

LISTEN UP



Nelson: Looking for Little Stevie

Look for **Montell Griffin-Roy Jones II** on HBO in August ... Unbeaten heavyweight **Michael Grant** was tentatively scheduled to face **Tim Witherspoon** on the **Andrew Golota-Ray Mercer** undercard at Madison Square Garden, but was pulled out after struggling to a split decision win over clubfighter **Jeff Wooden** ... If IBF lightweight champion **Phillip Holiday** gets by **David Sample** on May 16, he'll likely next defend against the highly touted **Shane Mosley** ... On May 31, IBF junior welterweight champion **Kostya Tszyu** will defend against **Vince Phillips** in Atlantic City. The bout will be televised on HBO's *Boxing After Dark.* Said Tszyu, "First Phillips, then 'The Golden Boy.'" Underneath: undefeated heavyweight **Kirk Johnson** vs. **David Izonritei** ... Sounds like July 18 for the long-awaited junior bantamweight clash between Albuquerque neighbors **Johnny Tapia** and **Danny Romero**. As we went to press, the site was likely to be Las Vegas, not Albuquerque. "It comes down to money," said Top Rank matchmaker **Bruce Trampler**. "Both kids want to make as much as they can" ... **Azumah Nelson** is likely to rise to lightweight. He'd like to challenge newly crowned WBC champion **Steve Johnston.**

FUTURE FIGHTS

By Art Manteris

VP/Director of Race and Sports Operations Las Vegas Hilton SuperBook

Favorite	Underdog	Odds	The Skinny
Roy Jones	Montell Griffin	5-1	Griffin lucky to win, but more competitive than expected
Andrew Golota	Ray Mercer	2-1	Tough, interesting fight; who knows what to expect from Golota
Kostya Tszyu	Vince Phillips	5-2	Tszyu ready to emerge as force at 140 pounds
Naseem Hamed	Wilfredo Vazquez	2-1	Odds dependent on which fighter has home-field advantage

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